VOL. XXXII, No. 1 JULY, 1934 No. 125

APR 16 1935 the Publishers

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THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

Rag-Paper

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $2.00 per annum; single copies, 50 cents

Published by The Theosophical Society
at 64 Washington Mews, New York, N.Y.

July; October; January; April

Address all communications to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York

In Europe, single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2, England; or to Mr. E. H. Lincoln, 9 Beaconsfield Road, Low Fell, Gateshead-on-Tyne, England, from whom all back numbers may be obtained. Annual subscription price, $2.00, postpaid.

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Entered as second-class matter September 5, 1923, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY *is the official organ of the original Theosophical Society founded in New York by H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge and others, in 1875.*

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EDITORS, THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY, 1934

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Modern Superstition

ACCORDING to Webster, superstition is "an excessive reverence for, or fear of, that which is unknown or mysterious". Superstitious beliefs are "irrational"; that is to say, they are based upon incorrect observation and insufficient experience, or they are products of illogical reasoning. The mediæval zoologist was superstitious, when he affirmed, without sufficient evidence, that bear cubs are born as chunks of meat which the mother bear licks into shape. The guest in a haunted house is superstitious when he is too easily convinced that a curtain fluttering in the wind is a ghost.

Modern science, with its experimental approach to physical truth, has delivered mankind from a multitude of baseless fancies and fears. The zoologist of to-day is careful to observe the habits of bears before he describes them. When strange things happen in a haunted house, the guiding principle of the scientific investigator is very properly to seek a normal or commonplace explanation before he considers seriously the "ghost-hypothesis". The man of the Twentieth Century has a comfortable sense of superiority because he no longer supposes that lakes and forests harbour undines and dragons. He is even a little ashamed of his interest in contemporary "sea-serpents".

A comfortable sense of superiority should be regarded as a danger-signal. It is true that modern man has been freed from many superstitions which were ridiculous or horrible or degrading. But also he has cast aside many beliefs verified by centuries of experience; and at the same time he has taken into his mind other beliefs as confused and irrational as any of the mental phantoms which he has ejected. The modern world is no less superstitious than the mediæval. It has merely adopted a different set of superstitions.

In particular, modern man is afflicted by an excessive reverence for and fear of "science". He seldom dares to question any statement delivered *ex cathedra* by a scientist. The advancement of knowledge since the Renaissance has dazzled him. He does not doubt that the methods of observation and experiment

which have revealed and exploited so many secrets of physical Nature, can solve any problem proposed by the human mind. This is a serious delusion. Scientists themselves do not often realize the limitations which their methods impose upon them. Science is fundamentally concerned with the measurement and analysis of objective, material things. Within its chosen sphere, it speaks with authority; but outside this, it has no authority whatsoever. The biologist, for instance, has gathered a wealth of information concerning the physical processes co-ordinated with organic life; but he knows nothing about this life itself, for he cannot measure or analyze it. If he confessed his ignorance and helplessness, no one would blame him; but he prefers a less humiliating expedient. He pretends that "life" is nothing but a word which defines certain modes of physical behaviour; that, like colour and odour, life is, in fact, nothing but a phenomenon of matter, a by-product of certain chemical combinations.

This is, of course, undiluted superstition. It is irrational to attribute "unknown and mysterious" qualities to a substance, the attributes of which have already been specifically defined. "Matter" has mass and extension; it occupies space. It is atomic or corpuscular, and its particles are in constant motion. That is practically all that can be said about "pure matter". It is from this abstraction that scientific materialists imagine all the properties of life to proceed, although the most elementary logic must demonstrate that such a process is unintelligible. The utmost which one can assume is that matter and life are always found in association; but this is not materialism. As a matter of fact, the properties of "pure matter" do not even explain electricity or radiation or the behaviour of the chemical atom itself.

Nevertheless, the superstitious veneration for matter as the source of life persists, not only among the amateurs of popular science, but among the professionals who ought to know better. One cannot hold such a belief and retain any faith in a spiritual world or in the soul. That is why almost any sort of religion which recognizes some mode of conscious existence other than that of the physical body, is preferable to "science-worship". The most infantile belief in unseen intelligences is, indeed, truer to Nature than the creed which admits no possibility of life or consciousness apart from protoplasm. The dragons of ancient fancy at least correspond to invisible realities; but the unseen "creatures" of science—quanta, electrons, atoms, molecules, genes, and so on—correspond, in the last analysis, only to figments in the minds of professors. They are necessarily unreal, non-existent, since they are represented as inanimate, lifeless, devoid of any conscious principle or purpose. They are names, not things, *nomina non res*.

Anthropocentric Astronomy

Materialistic superstition has curiously affected the development of astronomical theory. There has been a revival of anthropocentrism. Man is resuming his old, familiar pose in the centre of the cosmic stage. There is an increasing tendency among astronomers to take the earth, the human race, and themselves, in particular, much too seriously. Many of them seem to be convinced

that, in all probability, the earth is the only place in the universe where life and intelligence exist, for they cannot conceive of protoplasm produced under any conditions except those which accidentally happen to prevail on this planet. Such a notion is actually more anthropocentric than the Ptolemaic system which arbitrarily postulated that the earth is the central body of the solar system, but did not deny the possibility of life elsewhere. On the contrary, many astronomers of antiquity believed that the heavenly bodies themselves were living beings, *daimons* or gods. The universe which Dante contemplated may appear small, by contrast with the "meta-galaxy" of modern astronomers, but it was alive at every point; it was infinitely rich in divine possibilities.

The brain-mind, the lower Manas, is incapable of sustained meditation upon any vast conception; sooner or later, its native arrogance and self-concern will assert themselves. The cosmic vistas, opened up by Copernicus and Galileo, have not strengthened man's sense of the infinite mystery that surrounds him, as they might have done. If one may judge by the tone of their published statements, most astronomers to-day appear to have convinced themselves that there is no mystery, infinite or finite, which their brains cannot solve. The simple-minded might infer that we really know the nature and origin of cosmic space and its contents.

The fashionable theory at present is that of the "expanding universe". We quote the following from *The New York Times* of April 24, 1934:

> The physical universe, according to the latest cosmological calculations based on astronomical observation, is a finite sphere 6,000,000,000 light-years in diameter. It is composed of 500,000,000,000,000 nebulæ, each stellar unit being 80,000,000 times as bright as the sun and about 800,000,000 times as massive. These and other new dimensions of space and its content were presented before scientists attending the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences, by Dr. Edwin Hubble of Mount Wilson Observatory, who is said to have "seen and probed more of the universe than any other person".
>
> Nebulæ are now observed, Dr. Hubble stated, at distances as great as 300,000,000 to 450,000,000 light-years and their speed of recession corresponds to velocities of 30,000 to 40,000 miles a second. Observations so far show that the greater the distance of the nebulæ, the greater is the speed with which they are receding. The speed has been found to increase at a definite rate, which is about 100 miles a second for each million light-years of distance. As the latest figures show the physical universe to stretch 6,000,000,000 light-years in diameter, the nebulæ at the outer rim of the "cosmic bubble" are rushing away from the earth and from one another at the speed of the velocity of light, 186,000 miles a second. As the speed of light, according to the theory of relativity, is the maximum possible, and as the uttermost boundary of the physical universe coincides with a point where the outermost nebulæ are travelling at the speed of light, this may be taken as another corroboration of relativity. Beyond this boundary there is literally nothing, for space cannot exist without matter, according to relativity, and the latest cosmogony shows that beyond a point of 6,000,000,000 light-years there is no more matter, not even infinitesimal cosmic dust. . . .
>
> "On the grand scale", said Dr. Hubble, "we may picture the stellar system [the system our sun belongs to] drifting through the universe as a swarm of bees drifting through the air. From our position somewhere within the system, we look out through the swarm of stars, past the borders, into the universe beyond. It is empty for the most part—vast stretches of empty space. But here and there, at immense intervals, we find other

stellar systems, comparable with our own. They are so distant that in general we do not see the individual stars. They appear as faint patches of light and hence are called nebulæ, that is, clouds. The nebulæ are great beacons scattered through the depths of space. We see a few that appear large and bright. These are the nearer nebulæ. Then we find them smaller and fainter in constantly increasing numbers and we know we are reaching out into space further and even further." . . . The spectra of nebulæ, he said, exhibited a peculiar feature in that the absorption lines were not in their usual position but were displaced toward the red end of the spectrum, and that the fainter the nebula, or the further away, the greater was the shift in the direction of the red. . . . Red shifts are due either to actual motion or to some hitherto unrecognized principle of physics. On this interpretation, the nebulæ are running away from us and the further away they are the faster they are travelling. . . . The faster they are travelling the further they have gone.

The present distribution of nebulæ can be represented on the assumption that they were once jammed together in our particular region of space, and at a particular instant about 2,000,000,000 years ago they started rushing away in all directions at various velocities.

Sir Arthur Eddington recently expressed the hope that "the next generation will find something worth preserving, something not wholly illusory", in the present body of scientific thought. The fact is that when scientists speculate as recklessly as Dr. Hubble, they are false to the principles of their method. The whole hypothesis of the "expanding universe" is built upon the tiniest and most unsubstantial foundation. It has a legitimate place in pure mathematics, which is concerned, not with the actual, but with the "ideal" or "possible". But as an explanation of the world in which we live, it is presumptuous and fabulous.

One does not doubt that astronomers describe correctly what they see; but they see so little and affirm so much. All their assumptions, indeed, depend upon two postulates, that the velocity of light is universally uniform, and that no greater velocity than that of 186,000 miles a second is possible. This is the demonstrated speed of light within the earth's atmosphere; but as an occultist has written, "could they measure light above our atmosphere", they would discover that the speed of light actually varies according to the medium upon which it travels. There is a most important factor omitted from the astronomers' calculations,—the variable nature of space, terrestrial, interplanetary and interstellar. For example, they make no allowance for the possible impeding effect of meteoric masses and atmospheric tremors upon the direction and rapidity of the light-rays. One cannot avoid the conclusion that a very large part of contemporary astronomical speculation is valueless except as an entertaining mathematical exercise.

A Fragment of Occult Astronomy

Probably the modern astronomer is convinced that he carefully distinguishes between the things which he knows and the things which he postulates. It is, however, inconceivable that the stars will convey any real message to him, unless he turn towards them with a humble and reverent heart. This is not a platitude. The cosmos is a mystery and must be felt as such, to be known even in the slight measure in which knowledge is possible for man. It is instructive to compare

the conventional astronomical attitude towards the heavens with the humility and restraint of the Adepts whose views are transmitted by Madame Blavatsky. Reasoning by analogy, they express their conviction that forms of life and substance, in some way corresponding to our own, exist, not only in the stars but in the interstellar spaces which scientists characterize as "empty". However, they claim no knowledge which they have not proved by experience, and they do not hesitate to affirm that there are definite limitations to the extension of human knowledge in the cosmic field, limitations which are imposed by the nature and purpose of the Cycle in which man is now evolving.

> We are taught that the highest Dhyan Chohans, or Planetary Spirits (beyond the cognizance of the law of analogy) are in ignorance of what lies beyond the visible Planetary Systems, since their essence cannot assimilate itself to that of worlds beyond our Solar System. When they reach a higher stage of evolution, these other universes will be open to them; meanwhile they have complete knowledge of all the worlds within the limits of our Solar System. . . . For—while accepting the old Hermetic axiom, "as above, so below"—as we may well believe that Nature on Earth displays the most careful economy, utilizing every vile and waste thing in her marvellous transformations, and withal *never* repeating herself, so we may justly conclude that there is no other Globe in all her infinite systems so closely resembling this Earth, that the ordinary powers of man's thought would be able to imagine and reproduce its semblance and containment. . . . But even more. The ordinary man has no experience of any state of consciousness other than that to which the physical senses link him. Men dream; they sleep the profound sleep which is too deep for its dreams to impress the physical brain; and in these states there must still be consciousness. How, then, while these mysteries remain unexplored, can *we* hope to speculate with profit on the nature of Globes which, in the economy of Nature, must needs belong to states of consciousness other and quite different from any which man experiences here. . . . [The Adepts] *know* that almost all the Planetary Worlds are inhabited, but—even in spirit—they can have access only to those of our System; and they are also aware how difficult it is, *even for them*, to put themselves into full rapport even with the planes of consciousness within our System, differing as they do from the states of consciousness possible on this Globe. . . . Such knowledge and intercourse are possible to them because they have learned how to penetrate to planes of consciousness which are closed to the perceptions of ordinary men; but were they to communicate their knowledge, the world would be no wiser, because men lack that experience of other forms of perception which alone could enable them to grasp what they might be told (*The Secret Doctrine*, ed. 1893, II, 740-741).

From these statements we may draw certain inferences. If the law of analogy be universally operative, there is literal as well as figurative truth in the Pauline saying that "one star differeth from another star in glory". Although in its profoundest essence the All is One, this Unity is manifested as infinite number. Nature abhors uniformity at least as much as she abhors a vacuum. This is true on earth, although politicians and economists deny it. Why is it not equally true in the heavens? If scientists admitted even the possibility of individual variation among the stars and nebulæ, with all that this implies, they might be more cautious in their invention of "cosmologies". In any case, it is rational to suggest that if there be an infinite diversity of states of consciousness in the Universe, the forms of matter and the modes of motion will vary correspondingly. Inevitably, however, we can comprehend only that which we are

capable of experiencing. It has been said that we do not see the real Sun. If this be true, the real stars are, if possible, even more invisible to our earthly vision. What, then, do we see? Mere points of light transformed by our atmosphere and symbolizing existences beyond our ken? Vibrations in the earth's "ether", responding to the myriads of ever-mysterious luminous influences that reach us from the great deep of Space? We do not know. There is so much which we can never know while we are mortal and human; but at least we can have the grace to confess our want of knowledge. In truth, no more than Job do we understand the ineffable power "which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south". If we pretend that we know more, it is evidence that we do not know as much.

Synthetic Supermen

As Theosophy has always taught, the body and outward estate of man change their form and mode according to the operation of Karma. The term, Karma, is so fertile in meaning, so rich in connotations, that any attempt to define it is apt to be misleading. However, we may conceive it, in one sense, as a manifestation of Kundalini Shakti, "the power which brings about that 'continuous adjustment of *internal relations to external relations*', which is the essence of life according to Herbert Spencer, and 'that continuous adjustment of *external relations to internal relations*', which is the basis of transmigration of souls, Punarjanman (Re-birth), in the doctrines of the ancient Hindu philosophers" (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 312).

We cannot conceive of any living creature, in which both processes of adjustment are not active. They are complementary, like inhalation and exhalation, like the expansion and contraction of the heart. Our minds and characters are affected, more than some of us like to admit, by our physical environment, in particular by the chemical changes always taking place within our bodies. No one questions the fact that drugs and internal secretions can paralyze or unduly stimulate certain brain-centres, and that any cerebral disorder reacts upon our personal consciousness, disturbing such balance of forces as may exist on the psychic plane. It is equally self-evident that thought and emotion affect and modify the body. The strong man strives to overcome his physical and psychic disabilities. He refuses to surrender to the tyranny of his body or to the temptations of his environment. Indeed, it is in accordance with Karma that our bodily processes, in general, can only trouble our consciousness, in the degree that, in this life or another, we deliberately endowed them with that power by self-indulgence of one kind or another. It is both natural and just, for instance, that dyspepsia should make us gloomy, if the dyspepsia itself be the effect of years or lives of over-eating.

Theosophy is, however, in complete disaccord with those scientists who assert that it is possible to create a new and better species of mankind by chemical or surgical means. Genius is made manifest by individual effort, by the spirit of man working with the materials provided by Karma or Nature. Every new and better state of consciousness is an inward creation of imagination and will;

it cannot be induced artificially by any set of outward conditions. Nevertheless, all races have cherished the delusion that there is some easy way, some "short-cut", to wisdom and power. It has been everywhere the pretension of left-hand magic, that one could accomplish by physical practices that which is in reality only attainable by the full exercise of the spiritual will. *Hatha yoga* and the tantric rituals of India are examples.

It is a disquieting sign of the times, that an obsession of this order is becoming epidemic in certain scientific circles. One never knows what external forms a scientific obsession may assume, for men of science have a dangerous habit of testing their ideas upon animals and graduate students. It is by no means impossible that someday they will produce, not a race of geniuses but a race of monsters. An experimenter who kills dogs and then tries to resurrect them, would scarcely hesitate to "create" a Dracula, if this were possible.

The New York Times (March 31, 1934) reports the following "prophecy" by Professor Bogert of Columbia University. It was delivered before the closing session of a meeting of the American Chemical Society at St. Petersburg, Florida.

> The coming of the superman and the super-race may not have to wait for the tortuous and uncertain processes of evolution, taking hundreds of thousands of years, but may be brought about within a few generations through organic chemistry. A prophecy to this effect was made by Professor Marston T. Bogert. Organic chemistry, he said, was gradually learning the relationship between certain chemicals and their influence on man's behaviour and personality. It was also learning more and more about the chemical constitution of living matter, and [how] to synthesize products, in which it improved vastly upon nature. The time would come therefore, he said, when the chemist would be able to make substances that would greatly increase the thinking powers of the brain, as well as the strength, health, and beauty of the body, without having to wait for the hit-or-miss methods of evolution, which, from the human point of view, might lead in the wrong direction. When that time came, he said, synthetic chemicals would not be used merely for the healing of ills and the correction of nature's errors, but for the positive direction of the forces of life by the intelligence of man. With the intelligence nature endowed him with, he would devise ways to develop greater intelligence by finding artificial means for utilizing potentialities in his brain-power now lying dormant because nature had not provided the means for making it work at full capacity. . . . There was every reason to hope that chemists would eventually be able to produce substances that would bring out the latent powers of the known and of the now unknown areas in the brain. Instead of drugs producing stupor, or bringing to the surface qualities of cruelty and violence, we would have drugs which would enhance alertness and intelligence, stimulate spiritual qualities, enable the body to utilize all its latent powers without any after-effects and make it possible for man to attain a greater and keener æsthetic enjoyment of his own life, with great good-will toward the rest of his fellows, "synthetic supermen" like himself. Significant steps promising definite results in this direction have been made in the last two years in chemical research laboratories in England, Germany, Switzerland, and in the United States, including Columbia University. This research had revealed, Professor Bogert reported, that seven substances in nature, all producing different effects, some essential to life while others were very destructive, were all derivatives of one and the same substance, a chemical known as phenanthrine.

We are expected to infer that the future happiness and grandeur of the human race depend upon the exploitation of the chemical possibilities of phenanthrine.

If we were not more or less hardened to this sort of "scientific" dreaming, its nonsensical quality would be so apparent that all comment would be unnecessary. Does anyone seriously suppose that phenanthrine will build for us a new Parthenon, or make all men like Giotto and Dante and Shakespeare?

It requires the divine gift of irony to do justice to the chimæras of the "scientific imagination". That is why we venture to quote a stanza from a satirical poem published in the *New York Sun*, April 9, 1934. The verses were inspired by the following news item: "Mother love is due to manganese in her diet, and its absence causes it to disappear, says Dr. Elmer V. McCollum of Johns Hopkins University."

When a little baby's crooning
Makes mamma a little sick
And she loves to flog the kiddies
With a barrel stave or stick;
When an infant's cry of "Mother!"
With her nature disagrees,
Don't be startled, for it's nothing
But a need of manganese.

Humanist Religion

It is not astonishing that religious instincts and sentiments are paralyzed and maimed when they are brought into contact with the prevailing scientific spirit and are not strong enough to resist its invasion of the mind. Even materialists are sometimes concerned when they consider the moral chaos which they have helped to create. They are forced to admit that religion has been a great historical social force; and some of them are seriously working to found a new religion which will be the worship of man and of human powers.

We quote from the *New York Times*, April 9, 1934.

Dr. John Dewey addressed the First Humanist Society of New York yesterday on "Emotion and Religion". "With the decay of the older religions", he said, "man needs to-day the stimulating force of intense emotion and will find it only in three things: the 'cosmic emotion' of Einstein, the passion for the spread of intelligence, and the passion for social justice." Asserting that religions always had exploited the emotions for specific ends, he continued: "Emotional crises such as birth and death, spring sowing and fall harvest, the initiation of adolescents, because of the striking character of these events, have by primitive people been associated with the supernatural. Pains have been taken to make the ceremonials of religion impressive, so as to call out personal emotion. A large part of the hold which Christianity and Judaism have on their adherents is due to the emotional atmosphere which accompanied their early life. Even when these persons become intellectually skeptical, their emotions frequently keep them within the fold. But heaven and hell seem very remote to-day. They are fading out because our emotions find sufficient play in the world around us. As we fix our emotions on the human, the supernatural fades away."

The Modernist Sin Against Nature

Dr. Hubble, Professor Bogert and Professor Dewey illustrate, in their respective fields, the most deep-seated of modern intellectual perversions. Unless this disease of thought be checked, it will ravage and destroy what we call

modern civilization. It is not enough merely to describe it as materialism; for ancient materialism, whatever its defects, was not inspired by the "delusions of grandeur" which animate so many of our activities to-day. The typical materialists of the Græco-Roman world, Epicurus and Lucretius and their followers, confessed the perfection of Nature. Some of them, like Lucretius, sought a genuine religious consolation in the prostration of their souls before the spectacle of her divine beauty and order. If they erred, it was because they despised man too completely, discerning no future for him save annihilation, conceiving him as a creature of a day, to whose aspirations Nature was utterly indifferent.

This is not the modernist sin. With inexplicable inconsistency, the contemporary materialist, who believes neither in immortality nor in free-will, nevertheless assumes that man has both the right and the power to attain happiness and authority upon earth. He sins against Nature because he professes to believe that the universe, apart from the human personality, is devoid of purpose or direction or meaning. In the terminology of our ancestors, he blasphemes against God.

"You must know and remember one thing", an Indian Master has written; "we but follow and servilely copy Nature in her works". These words point to the abyss which separates Theosophy from all modernistic speculation. The Theosophist identifies the hidden life of Nature with the divine life—*Deus sive Natura*. He makes no distinction between Nature, in its real essence, and the "Heavenly Sophia", the Wisdom which is the manifestation of the Being of God. The course and order of events, the *tempo* and sequence of evolution on all planes, have, therefore, a sacred causation and significance. In any case, one need not be an occultist to realize the dream-like quality of the fancy that the laws of existence can be amended or repealed by any human legislation. Whether we approve or not, they are fundamental and irrevocable.

Materialists themselves emphasize the absoluteness of the "laws of mechanics", to which motion in the inorganic world so generally conforms; but they fail utterly to perceive that there are principles no less rigorous which set limits to the activities of the human personality. The true philosopher seeks to adapt his purposes to the divine purpose, in so far as this is revealed to him by the phenomena of Nature, by the circumstances and duties of his life, by the constitution of the sphere of existence into which he is born. It is the grossest illusion to suppose that we can escape from that sphere before we have learned the lessons which it has to teach us. The result of every attempt to "improve" Nature and to correct her "errors" is to fall into still greater confusion and misery. Gérard d'Houville, referring to the genius of Molière, has pointed out that his plots are almost invariably concerned with a common theme, the folly and discomfiture of those who "have been unwilling to recognize natural laws, and have fancied that they could twist these principles to their profit" (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, April 15, 1934).

A humanist religion, as conceived by the modernists, is a sin against Nature. Its plans for social justice, even when inspired in part by admirable motives, disregard the manifest differences between human beings, and inevitably imply

injustice to individuals. Its "passion for the spread of intelligence" takes no account of the elementary truth that intelligence is the most terrible of curses, when its growth is artificially and inordinately quickened. When there is no interference with normal growth, the evolution of the intellect proceeds *pari passu* with the evolution of the moral sense. The story of the forbidden fruit in Genesis is a very profound allegory. As to the "cosmic emotion of Einstein", one hesitates to comment, for one does not know what Einstein's emotions may be. However, it is legitimate to assume that for the devotee of humanism it is not the cosmos which moves him to ardour, but the current scientific representation of the cosmos—which is a very different thing.

Protestantism and Materialism

"Humanist religion" is not limited to a "little group of serious thinkers". It is actually the creed of millions of nominal Christians attached to one or another of the Protestant denominations. Many churches are nothing but lecture-halls where current economic and political problems are discussed. For example, we read in the *New York Times* (May 14, 1934), that a New York Methodist minister delivered a violent attack from the pulpit upon the public utilities corporations. On the same Sunday, in the old Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, a pastor from Los Angeles extolled the "wonders of science", suggesting with easy optimism that "God is whispering in the radio, the airplane and the submarine", and arguing—by what logical process we cannot imagine—that these discoveries make it easier to believe in immortality. Another preacher, a Methodist, appealed to the "mothers of the world" to become "anti-war conscious". Still another, a Presbyterian, denounced the munitions manufacturers. "If their profits were cancelled", he said, "we should have crossed in one step half the distance to a warless world." Incidentally, according to this view of history, there would have been no Cæsar, no Attila, no Genghis Khan, if it had not been for the munitions manufacturers.

These pronouncements are thoroughly typical. Both the clergy and the laity have surrendered to the spirit of modernism. As their activities prove, few of them have any living faith in God or Nature. Protestantism, with some striking exceptions, has become one of the subversive influences in the modern state,—an ally, a despised ally, of the communists and socialists, and an agency for the dissemination of *unnatural* doctrines—pacifism, internationalism, class warfare and the "redistribution of wealth", birth-control, etc., etc. Doubtless, the ideal of "ministers of the Gospel", as they define it to themselves, is the service of mankind; but they conceive philanthropy and humanitarianism almost wholly in material terms. They seem to be incapable of imagining a state of "social justice" which is not brought into being by legislation and the advancement of physical science. This is the worst form of materialism, and in addition it is treason to the Master whom they pretend to serve. They are guilty of hypocrisy, Pharisaism and priestcraft. There is no entity more contemptible than the priest who employs the symbols and rites of religion to conceal his spiritual emptiness and his denial of the divinity in Nature and in man.

FRAGMENTS

HE called, and I answered: Master, here am I.

And he said: Where hast thou been?

And I answered: All night long I have been seeking the amaranths growing beside the waters of Paradise.

They are the flowers of death, he said; no need to seek them. When the hour comes they will lie upon thy breast. There are better things to do.

So I sought for better things to do, and I found them not, though I sought diligently.

Again he called, and I answered: Master, here am I.

And he said: Where hast thou been?

And I answered: Seeking for an object for my search,—through all the sunlit day I have sought and found nothing. There were thistles by the wayside and tall weeds—I would have none of them; the gentle grass was there, and grain waving in the fields across the hedges.

The sun was hot, the Master said, the world was blackened by it. Leave the highway for the shade: seek, resting there.

And while I rested I slept, and in my dreams I saw the angels passing up and down the mystic ladder that goes from earth to heaven, and I heard their voices singing.

It seemed a long time that I slept, and when I wakened it was to hear the Master calling; and I answered: Master, here am I.

And he said: Where hast thou been?

And I answered: Watching the angels that passed from earth to heaven and back, and listening to their singing.

He smiled at that. And thou? he said.

I watched, I said.

There are better things to do, he answered; do thou as the angels.

CAVÉ.

THE DIVINITY OF THE KING IN ANCIENT EGYPT

EVERYONE knows what Herodotus wrote of the Egyptians—that they were the most truly religious people living in the world, and when to this we add for ourselves, as a well recognized historical fact, that in no civilization of the remote past was authority so centralized and so absolute as in Egypt, there is one unavoidable conclusion: in the estimation of the ancient Egyptians, power was not something in which chance played a conspicuous part; it was a divine gift. Again add to this the fact that the King was looked upon literally as of divine origin, and we see why this power was not even, perhaps, a gift, but rather was it a literal and unqualified inheritance from the gods. We also see why the focus of this power, its storehouse as it were, was the Throne, which meant, of course, the Pharaoh who sat upon the Throne, for in him was concentrated the "Sacred Force" which came down from above; he was its sole direct recipient; through him it streamed in unveiled splendour out over the land and the people under him, sustaining and nourishing both.

The ancestry of the Pharaoh stretched far back into the darkest night of time. According to Manetho, Egypt, long anterior to recorded history, had been ruled first by three dynasties of gods, then by four dynasties of demi-gods, and thus we find an upper triad and a lower quaternary as the ground-plan of all Egypt's later historical greatness. Ra, the first King of Egypt—the "solitary Demiurge" as he has been called—whose rule preceded that of Osiris by many thousands of years, is said to have had a reign which lasted for ninety centuries, as we reckon time. Ra struck the key-note; he laid the spiritual foundation; Osiris and Horus completed the structure; they filled in the mould around which all the later glory was built. The gods thus exercised a direct and holy influence upon mankind, until man became civilized. This slow work of cultivation fell primarily to the lot of the three divine dynasties, each successively contributing its share; then to the semi-divine group, after which, the future welfare of the kingdom being well established, "the gods returned to heaven".

According to tradition, the immediate successors of the gods and the demi-gods were not, however, completely mortal (involution like evolution moves with fine gradations), but were somewhat shadowy, formless beings, designated by Manetho as "manes", lesser gods—the outermost link between spirit and matter. They were like the living rungs of a ladder—a ladder down which the celestial Force was transmitted to the King, and up which the human "Occupiers of the Throne" could ascend for spiritual renewal; they formed a bridge between the human and the divine, between heaven and earth. So the first human King followed directly after the last of the "manes" who, when in the act of withdrawing, passed on the crown to his heir, but the change from divine to human

"did not cause any interruption in the royal lineage". Therefore we see how direct was the inheritance, for the Shemsu-Hor ("Servants of Horus") as those first Kings of the human dynasties called themselves, carried on the god-imparted tradition of royalty; and from the time of Menes, the first King of the official lists, the Egyptians declared that they had an unbroken line of Pharaohs straight through to the end, even down to the Ptolemies and the Cæsars. Divine Right was an established fact: spiritual first, then physical—an invariable law of life in any outpouring toward manifestation. In the earliest days, long before Egypt had reached the zenith of her magnificent civilization (the civilization of which we have historical records), this basic principle of the divine origin of authority had become a sacred tradition, and all the later, internal conflicts which, at last, after thousands of years, resulted in Egypt's downfall and outer dissolution, were waged for just that reason, to maintain just that principle, to keep unsullied—despite all counter and subversive tendencies—that gift which had descended straight from the gods themselves, from Ra himself. So convinced were the Egyptians that only "The Chosen One" could sit upon the throne of Ra that, if the heir apparent died and a younger brother became Pharaoh, it was believed to be the divine will and not a chance mishap which had regulated the succession. Thus, for instance, Amenhotep I had not been the direct heir of Ahmes I; it was the death of an elder brother, a result of "the intervention of the gods", which made him so. Rameses II was not, originally, the heir of his father Seti I, yet, in his own incomparably magnificent and sweeping way, he always maintained that he himself was "King in the Egg"—and that ended the matter! Incidentally, this is a phrase which has been variously interpreted, and it is one about which several interesting speculations might be made.

It has often been said that the history of Egypt is the history of her religion; that the life of the Egyptian people was inseparable from their religious institutions; that as the King lived in the gods and the gods in him, so was he a reservoir of creative energy and force, for in the eyes of the Egyptians, their King was Ra incarnate. In the Turin Papyrus especially (though it is also stated elsewhere), we get a clear-cut assurance that all the political institutions of Egypt had been established at the time of the divine dynasties, and had descended straight from them. Therefore, the power of the Pharaoh (a divine power), worked in and through these institutions, imparting life and inexhaustible vitality to them. There is a curious fact which invariably strikes and often puzzles the student of Egypt—though it does not puzzle the student of Theosophy—the fact that, as far back as we can go, the Egyptian civilization is found to be not only a fully formed but a *mature* organism; not something in the making, but something already accomplished. The very same religious beliefs, the very same religious rites, without fundamental change, are not merely dimly discernible but are distinctly and openly traceable from what we call primitive times to the end of the Græco-Roman Period. And underlying them all, the firm foundation upon which they all rest, is to be found the divine institution of Kingship, the unshakable belief in the divinity of the King himself.

Thus, as a member of the heavenly family—an integral part of it—the Pharaoh of Egypt was distinguished from all other beings who lived on earth; he was in a class entirely by himself; he represented and synthesized all life within his kingdom; and in the early days this was so literally true that the individual was an individual only when considered *within* the kingly power and influence; outside of these he had no existence at all,—a belief easily understood when we think of the relation between a Master and his chêlas.

Occupying this unique position, the Pharaoh naturally assumed all the offices of greatest responsibility in the State. He was High Priest throughout the Two Lands, although he himself was worshipped as a god in all the temples; it was he who made the offerings, for even though he could not, of course, always be present in person, those who officiated were acting literally *for him*, enabled so to act only because sustained by his occult power; cut them off from that source of life, and they perished forthwith. The invariable formula which we find in the records is, "A royal offering of such and such things", and so forth. He was Grand Vizier, even though another might be delegated to represent him; he was Chief of all the Armies, and Supreme Judge between the guilty and the innocent; in fact, there was nothing in which the royal hand was not both felt and seen and accepted. His authority was absolute.

Of all the different channels through which this divine power was transmitted, and also preserved (transmitted to the priesthood, preserved in the divine person of the King himself), perhaps one of the most interesting is to be found in the royal titles, their origins and significance, together with the royal names which accompanied them. To many of us it comes with something of a surprise when we learn that the Pharaohs of Egypt had five different and distinct royal titles (we cannot help wondering if there were not in reality *seven*, two of which were and still are unknown), with five or more different names attached, and that each name as well as the title to which it belonged, implied and actually embodied a special power or set of powers. This made of every King who sat upon the Golden Throne of Egypt a very complicated individual indeed, a being connected by invisible lines of force with every portion of the universe both seen and unseen. We who are laymen, read of Thothmes or of Rameses, for instance, and, providing we know which Thothmes or which Rameses is in question (whether the first, second or third), we are quite sure that we shall recognize the same Pharaoh again when we read about him, because we think that a name does not change. What is our discomfiture, however, when we find that names *do* change, or rather that he who was so familiar to us under the guise of Thothmes on one occasion, appears to be a complete stranger when we meet him as Setep-en-Ra, or as Ka-Nekht-Kha-em-Uast, or as something else on another occasion. Rameses II had thirty-three names under the head of only one of his five royal titles, and by any one of these thirty-three names of that single sign of royalty, must we learn to identify him when threading our way carefully through the ancient records. What is more important—through the instrumentality of any one of these, the Pharaoh could set in motion a current of force by the proper intonation of that name. This was a power in his hands, but it might

also be a power in the hands of an enemy, should that enemy chance upon the secret intonation; and this fact may partly account for the many names assumed by most of the Pharaohs, especially the later ones, for it was in later times, when the priesthood of Amen was in the ascendency, and black magic was a growing evil which had to be reckoned with, that many extra precautions and protections became necessary. It is well known what deep importance the people of ancient times attached to a name; indeed, we might almost say that, with them, a human being had no separate life as distinct from other human beings, until the day when he received his name. For not only did his name tell what he was, but, in the case of royalty, it often had a life of its own. Of Narmer, one of the proto-dynastic Kings, we learn that, on the battlefield, his name sprang suddenly into action, brandishing a heavy mace which was held firmly in both hands, and to such good purpose that the enemy was completely overpowered. Menes, otherwise known as Aha (the Warrior), was always preceded into battle by his name—not figuratively, but actually—with the consequence that the enemy fled in dismay. (The student of Theosophy would no doubt recognize in this the mysterious power which produces "perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy"—Kriyasakti). Little wonder, therefore, that the choice of royal names and titles entailed a long chain of consequences!

It is now many years since Egyptologists first recognized certain facts regarding the royal titles. They recognized, for instance, that the protocol of the Pharaoh of Egypt (at least from the twelfth dynasty onwards), not only contained the five names and special titles we have spoken of, but also that these titles with their names were invariably arranged in a fixed order. It was also long ago recognized that of these five, four were divisible into Horus and Ra names, two for Horus, two for Ra, while the remaining name and title was especially appropriated by the Crown. The solar or Ra names, always at the end of this formal and unchanging list, were, of course, written within the cartouche, symbol of the universe over which the Pharaoh reigned; the Horus names, one of which was invariably written first, each had another distinctive sign. Thus, in full, the normal, royal title (or succession of titles), without the individual names, read as follows: 1. The Horus or Ka title, which was said to belong to the Pharaoh only "beyond life", or after his "death". 2. Lord of the Two Crowns. 3. The Golden Horus. 4. King of Upper and Lower Egypt—this was the Coronation Name, and was enclosed in the first cartouche. 5. Son of Ra—the name received at birth, and to be found within the second cartouche. It would be impossible to do more than touch on the many far-reaching potencies which these titles, with their accompanying names, indicated—for each stood for some spiritual quality—but it will at once be seen that the chronology of the King's life was, *to all appearances* at least, in the inverse order of his titles. Reading backwards, therefore: as Son of Ra, the last title of the protocol, he was born to inherit the throne of his ancestors, and, upon ascending the throne, he assumed the next to the last title—King of Upper and Lower Egypt. The Golden Horus title is partly solar in that the god Horus himself, represented by the royal Falcon, was the direct spiritual descendent of Ra, and thus the

Pharaoh also was of the golden substance of Ra, and the golden essence of Ra ran in his veins. To the Egyptians, this was not a metaphysical statement, but a statement of spiritual fact. As Lord of the Two Crowns—the red and the white crowns blended into one—he was Lord of the two worlds, the inner and the outer, and the Crown was presided over by two protective goddesses. The King was himself the Double Crown incarnate; his was a universal overlordship.

Up to this point, the titles and names are more or less obvious, if one may use such a word for anything whatever which is connected with ancient Egypt; it is with the Ka-name (the first Horus title and the first on the list), that we come upon a mystery the true significance of which has baffled Egyptologists from the beginning, and about which hardly two will agree on all points. It remains, therefore, by far the most interesting to students of Theosophy, because, behind the apparent explanation, there lies a whole region of possibilities.

As we have already noted, the farther back we can get into the so-called primitive times of ancient Egypt, the more certain are we to come upon her religious beliefs in their original purity, unobscured by later theologizing. Also we have to remember that the Egyptians were not the "literal" people which, as a rule, Egyptologists have considered them; they did not put down, in black and white, all that they thought and believed. Back of what they wrote, one always has to search for what they really meant, what they were trying to imply. There was a veil deliberately drawn over that which was put in "writing", whether this was graven on stone or in the script of the papyri; all that portion which was esoteric was hidden under allegory—but the truth was there for those who could read. Hence it is that, of the true religion of the ancient Egyptians, we recognize or understand only so much as we ourselves know and understand of the universal Mystery Teaching.

The Ka-name was always written within a device which, for many years, remained a subject of open dispute among Egyptologists. From its form and general arrangement of line, it was at first thought to represent a royal standard, a banner with a deep fringe along the lower edge, and the royal name was therefore called interchangeably and rather loosely, either the "Ka-name" or the "banner-name" of the King. In the far-off days of earliest Egypt, when the records were so few that it has often been difficult for us to distinguish between one King and another, a certain fact was, nevertheless, recognizable: that the Pharaoh invariably had two distinct names, his birth name and his Ka-name (later, as we have seen, he had more—at least more names were revealed), but that he alone, of all his *entourage*—his nobles, his officials, his household in general—had the latter, and that these two names expressed the Pharaoh's dual nature: his body and his "soul"; they also represented the two worlds (inner and outer), in which he lived. Originally, therefore, it was only the King who had a Ka; not even the royal family—the King's brothers and sisters—had Kas of their own, none at least which had developed to the extent where a special name would be appropriate. This meant, of course, that he who sat upon the Throne was placed there because he had attained to a spiritual consciousness, or to a separate spiritual life, not yet attained by others—it was this *inner*

status which, in reality, constituted his sovereignty. In later times, when Egypt had begun to suffer from the creeping shadow of democratic ideas, *everyone* was thought to have a Ka—even objects had Kas. Nevertheless, a distinction in the case of royalty was always kept, for the King's was "the *living* Ka"; he alone shared in the body and soul of his celestial ancestors: his body, represented by his birth name, was the substance of Ra; his "soul", represented by his Ka-name, was "a Horus, detached from the supreme Horus".

This is not the place to enter, in any detail, upon the vexed question of the Ka, or of what the Ka really was in the secret Teaching of ancient Egypt. That is a subject in itself, and a very wide and involved subject at that. There is probably no other single point in the whole of Egyptology which has caused more animated discussion. The Ka has been described as almost everything from "a vampire which sucks the blood of its relatives", to "the activities of sense and perception"—both ideas, as a matter of fact, being capable of an occult interpretation. But granting that the Ka of the King was some spiritual part of him (and the upraised arms of aspiration—the hieroglyphic sign for the word "Ka"—surely calls for a distinctly mystical rendering), granting that it represented some personified spiritual status reached by no one else to the same exalted degree, what were the Ka's functions in so far as we may discover them from the exoteric records? Why was the Ka given a name of its own? What was the strange device which remained, from the beginning to the end, the one invariably used as a frame, a setting, one might say, for the Ka-name whenever that name was written? And above all, why did the Ka-title belong to the Pharaoh only "beyond life", only after his "death"? Was this figurative, or was it literal as most Egyptologists would have us believe?

The device upon, or within which the Ka-name was always written was an upright oblong in form, and was surmounted by the royal Falcon, symbol of Horus, he who soars aloft in the heavens—the "sky-goer". It was in a vacant space in the upper part of the oblong (a space which very likely represented the heavens themselves), that the Ka-name was written, and below, a number of perpendicular lines were invariably present, but what those lines were intended to represent was a riddle which, for many years, remained unsolved—the notion that the oblong itself was a banner, and that the lines below were intended to indicate (as already noted), a long fringe, not being entirely convincing. The Egyptian name for this device was "Serekh", and the meaning of that word is, "That which makes known". But what was it that was made known? No one could answer with any degree of certainty. At last, after many years of investigation, and as a result of comparing later and more detailed drawings of this device, with those that were earlier and less decipherable, it was discovered that the perpendicular lines which had been thought to represent fringe, in reality represented the upright lines of a closed doorway, flanked by recessed panelling —exactly the type of door found in the wall, opposite the entrance of early Egyptian tombs. To Maspero and to Petrie belongs the credit for this decipherment, though neither ever got beyond a very general interpretation. But what was the meaning of that small and narrow doorway? What were the ancient

Egyptians trying to make us understand of its true significance in the Mystery Teaching? It could hardly have been so conspicuously and so invariably present, had it been intended merely to symbolize the ancient doctrine of reincarnation—the passing in and out of life through the doorway of the tomb; though in its more exoteric form it may have indicated that as well. Such an explanation, however, would be too obvious, and the Egyptians of old were never obvious. Its continued presence seems to make evident the fact that it signified something which was regarded as of the utmost importance, but it is by analogy only that we are likely to discover why that symbol persisted, from the earliest to the latest times, as a necessary part of "tomb equipment".

In the most representative Egyptian tombs, there was always an inner and an outer chamber, with that small doorway between them, and a study of the ritual of the dead (in which so many lost secrets are interred), throws much light on its significance; for it shows us that this doorway was made expressly for the Ka of the "deceased" when passing from the outer "chamber of offerings" to the "inner chamber". We know that the chamber of "burial" was far below, underground, and that it was up the straight, ascending shaft, connecting it with the chamber of "offerings", that the Ka of the "deceased" could mount, partake of the "offerings", and then enter the inner sanctuary through that little, closed doorway. So the door was a door of *access*—of access to the chamber within; but it was only the Ka of the "deceased" who possessed its secret, for on the lintel above it (just as in the device which was called the "Serekh") the individual Ka-name was inscribed, indicating proprietorship. The funerary ritual further assures us that it was *only* after feeding upon the "sacrifices" made in the outer "chamber of offerings", that the Ka could retreat through that doorway to the inner sanctuary, renewed in spiritual vigour, this "feeding" being continued as long as the Ka had need of that particular kind of sustenance. It does not take much effort of the imagination, therefore, to see in this the age-old lesson: that it is only by the continued sacrifices of the outer man, that the enduring, inner personality, the divine part of him, comes finally to birth. And it is, perhaps, from *The Voice of the Silence* particularly that we may get our real clue to the probable meaning of the doorway itself. For there we read of retiring "into the inmost chamber, the chamber of the heart, and the abode of the world's mother", of "the fiery power", as the result of the action of which the soul becomes a "walker of the sky"—in the language of ancient Egypt, the soul became Horus, "the sky goer". Is not that doorway intended to symbolize the "doorway of the heart", the entrance to the Way of Life, only discovered upon the "death" and "entombment" of the lower nature? Is it not the beginning of the "small, old path that leadeth far away" to which Theosophy for ever points so eloquently? And was it not through it alone that the ancient Egyptians, like ourselves of to-day, hoped to enter into life immortal? But it was the Pharaoh who showed them the way, because there was no one else in outer, active life, who could equal him in the greatness of his mystic powers; it was he who had attained, for he could not otherwise have been acknowledged from above as "The Occupier of the Throne". And that is why his Ka-name is always to be

found on the lintel over the doorway—the first title of the Pharaoh, but the title which became his only "beyond life".

There cannot be the slightest doubt in the mind of any student of Theosophy that the Pharaohs of Egypt (particularly those of the earliest dynasties) were great Adept Kings, in close touch with the Lodge. As we have seen, they were the direct inheritors of the gods who preceded them, and they were the model upon which the infant races were to mould themselves—those infant races which eventually were to clothe themselves with the same garment of immortality in which the Pharaoh himself was already clothed. It was he who had become "united with his Ka"; it was he who had become a "walker of the sky". In the Pyramid Texts there are innumerable passages indicating the possession of these great yogi powers by the Pharaoh, passages which can be linked with other similar passages in *The Voice of the Silence*, and elsewhere. Thus the Pharaoh is likened to a great bird with outstretched wings, sailing across the heavens: "He ascends to the sky as a falcon. . . . He flies, he flies! . . . He is not of the earth, he is of the sky!"; or, "He goes to the sky, he goes to the sky! On the wind! On the wind!" And the unforgettable line of adoring wonder at the splendour and the majesty of the Pharaoh when he takes his rightful place in the company of the Immortals: "Oh lofty one among the Imperishable Stars, thou perishest not eternally!"

In Theosophy we find an incalculable amount of treasure which has come down to us direct from ancient Egypt. Would it be too unreasonable, therefore, if we were to think of these great Pharaohs (especially those whose incarnation in the early days, made it possible for them to work in the still undimmed light which lingered on after the august Rulers of the divine dynasties had "returned to heaven") as our own direct link with the Lodge to-day? We have been told, not once but many times, that the present crying need in the world is for "God-instructed men to rule the nations", and it would seem natural that we should turn with longing and with hope to those illustrious Kings of old who reigned so wisely; for back of them stretched the unending line of gods, the Lodge itself, from whence those Pharaohs sprang, and from whence their wisdom emanated. We know that the eternal Warfare between the White Lodge and the Black goes on; we are told that it is, even now, gathering for its flood, and that "the Battle of the Marne has not yet been fought in the spiritual world". Would it be so difficult to imagine that already a glimmer of Egypt's ancient glory had begun to spread around and over us—had we but the eyes to see? That the mighty Pharaohs of bygone days, drawn up in dazzling battle-formation, may actually, at this very moment, be preparing for the combat—helping to make it possible for the gods to return to us? For we know that long ages ago it was promised they *would* return—that they would return when the last great battle had been fought and won: when Horus had at length met and vanquished his immemorial enemy, Set.

HETEP-EN-NETER.

WITHOUT CENSOR

II.

ONCE the decision to enter the Army had been made, there followed a month of the most hectic preparation. The First Officers' Training Camps were to start, again at Plattsburgh, in the middle of May, and there was none too much time for all that had to be done. Physical examinations had first to be taken and passed, and once they were safely over, it was obviously the part of wisdom to see personally those who had it in their power to ensure that one's application for admission to the Camp would be acted upon favourably. When all this had been settled, there were family duties and obligations to be arranged for and shifted to the shoulders of others. One's partners had to be talked to, and the affairs of various clients turned over to them, and plans for the future conduct and re-arrangement of the business had to be discussed. Personal affairs had to be set in order, not only for a long absence from the country, but also in such a way that they would function smoothly during that absence, and with a minimum of attention. Indeed, it was clear that all such matters must be so covered as to provide for the possibility of not returning at all. There was the all-absorbing and highly important problem of the purchase of clothing and outfit, or as much as would be needed for the following three months, at least;—the rest could wait. There were talks with friends in the Movement, most important of all, and which took precedence over everything else. In fact, there was so much to do, and so many people to see, and so little time to do it all in, that it seemed a sheer impossibility that everything could be accomplished in time. It was, by some miracle; but I finally boarded the sleeper for Plattsburgh with the feeling that the strenuous life of a training camp now had no terrors for me, and that life there would be in the nature of a rest-cure compared to what I had just passed through.

Compared with the previous summer, it was a different Plattsburgh which met our eyes when we left the train the next morning from a siding near the Government Reservation,—and with a different atmosphere. Long wooden barracks had sprung up, along the side of the Parade Ground and in the woods and vacant spaces adjoining, each designed to accommodate two hundred and fifty officer candidates, or a war-strength Infantry Company. The place seemed alive with Regular Army officers and non-commissioned officers, who herded us about rapidly, and rushed us through all the ordinarily endless standing in line and waiting, for allotment to companies and for the issue of Government property, which seemed an inevitable concomitant of Army life. There was a mass-meeting held that night, at which the purpose of the Camp and the objects to be attained, and what would be expected of the candidates, was explained to them in brief, concise, military language by the Commanding Officer of the Camp and by other Senior Officers. At the end, there was a roar of applause, and much hand-

clapping. In horror, the Senior Major sprang to his feet, and, in biting and sarcastic terms, directed attention to the fact that in the Army it was not customary to evince either approbation or disapprobation, and ended with the words, "Hereafter, it will not be done!". Somewhat crestfallen, the candidates dispersed, feeling, however, that after all they had been started off on the right foot (or rather, the left foot, according to Infantry Drill Regulations), and that, anyway, this was the real thing.

In a little over twenty-four hours the training was under way, although made difficult by various inconveniences. For, the truth was, things were not ready. There was a shortage of certain kinds of equipment, sanitary arrangements were practically non-existent, the food fell below the standard of the Army ration in quantity and quality, and the blankets which had been issued were some which had been discarded by the Red Cross as being too small and too light. This last was remedied by a telegram to New York, and by sleeping with clothes and overcoats on until heavy blankets arrived, for the nights on Lake Champlain in May are still quite cold. All these things would have been of minor importance, save for the fact that the men were not hardened, coming as they did straight from sedentary lives in cities; and the unaccustomed, hard physical exercise was making rapid adjustment to conditions difficult enough in itself. In comparing notes with other men after the War, we all agreed that the conditions under which we lived for the first two weeks at Plattsburgh that spring, in view of our physical unpreparedness for them, were equal to anything which we experienced in the way of discomfort during our later war experience. But in a comparatively short time mistakes were rectified, conditions were improved, and our attention was free to be directed to the training itself.

This training was of a much more severe and intensive character than anything which any of us had experienced before. I had chosen the Infantry, because I had always walked a great deal, and because for some years I had been working with men, at a Rescue Mission operated by the Church of which I was a member, of the type which we were likely to get from the draft, and I felt that I knew something about the way in which to handle them. Also, because I felt a certain diffidence in regard to my ability to cope with the various mathematical formulæ and calculations necessary in the Field Artillery. The day started with Reveille, after which we were marched to Mess. At eight o'clock the work began, and, with intervals of ten minutes between each hour, continued until noon. We were marched again to Mess in the middle of the day, and were at work again from two to four in the afternoon. Ordinarily, an hour's drill alternated with an hour's lecture, usually outdoors, on some military topic, but when the Company was marched out on the Peru Road to the open rolling country for tactical problems, the whole morning was devoted to it. Retreat, at five o'clock, was followed by Evening Mess, and from seven to nine o'clock in the evening we were in School, the first hour there being devoted to study, and the second hour to a lecture with an examination and a quiz.

It was a singularly ill-chosen and inappropriate hour to devote to that purpose, for all concerned were far from being mentally at their best, as they were

by that time pretty thoroughly exhausted from the day's work. I remember vividly one particular evening when I found it practically impossible to stay awake. By keeping myself busied with books and papers during the first hour, I had succeeded in staving off slumber, but when the lecture started and there was nothing to do but sit still, the soothing tones of the Regular Army Officer's voice proved to be more than nature could cope with, and the proceedings became enveloped in a gradually thickening mist, as far as I was concerned. Suddenly, to my horror, I heard myself called on by the Instructor, to explain how I would have carried out the problem in question from that point, had I been in command, and what mistakes, if any, had been made in the order which had been actually given. I arose promptly to my feet, in a military and alert manner, but within was a complete void. I had heard nothing of the problem. An agonized and hurried mental groping did nothing to stimulate memory. The one word "pursuit" came, out of the general blackness. So I replied that it seemed to me that the mistake had been in not exploiting the advantage gained; that pursuit, prompt and immediate, had been indicated at that point. I warmed up to it as I went along, and said that apparently the Commanding Officer had forgotten the military rule,—when in doubt, do something, even if it is wrong; never do nothing. I thought that the order for pursuit should have been given at once, not forgetting to include the appropriate flank protection dictated by the nature of the terrain and the dispositions of the enemy. I remembered that from that morning's work. Realizing that I was beginning to run down, I resumed my seat with the feeling that my chance of a commission had now gone for good, expecting to hear low but derisive laughter. There was a silence, which I took to be merely the calm before the storm. Then, to my utter amazement and relief, I heard the Instructor say, in his most impressive manner, that he could not emphasize enough the point which had just been made; and he then proceeded to expatiate upon the subject of pursuit in general, and the clearly indicated necessity for it in this particular instance, and to insist that rapid and immediate appreciation of the right action to be taken at a juncture, an example of which had just been given, must be cultivated by all ranks. I felt that I was an authority on minor tactics, from then on. It was simple—I could do it in my sleep.

Close to the Canadian border, as we were at Plattsburgh, there was a large Roman Catholic element in the population. Just outside the town, there was a cemetery, and in it a singularly beautiful, life-size Calvary; it was in an isolated position, so that it stood out in a way which at once arrested attention, and the figure of the Christ on the Cross was that of a *man*, militant and courageous, rising above all suffering, radiating victory, an example of obedience unto death, the ideal of the Soldier. One dark and misty morning my Company started out to march to the open country to work out tactical problems in the field. As usual, we marched at attention until we were clear of the town, and then, at the command, we marched at ease, as was customary when any distance had to be covered, in order to minimize fatigue. The leading platoon started to sing, "There's a Long, Long Trail", and the whole column took it up. The Company

swung around the turn of the road, and marched on the cemetery. The mists hung low, completely obliterating the graves and the headstones, gathering about the foot of the Calvary in masses, and causing it to stand out in bold relief against a still darkened skyline, while the first rays of the sun, struggling through the clouds, fell directly upon the figure of the Christ, illuminating it, and in turn receiving back some of its radiance and its glory. There was a sheen of light, and as the head of the column saw it, the song which they were singing stopped, and gradually died away all down the line. There was a moment or two of silence, and then, at the head of the column, without a word of command, rifles were shifted to the right shoulder, the marching was at attention again, and the leading platoon started to sing, "The Son of God goes forth to War". There was a ripple, as the whole column came to attention, and took up the hymn all down the line, "Who follows in his train?" The singing was full of feeling now,—not the emotion of the revival meeting, but from the hearts of men who were facing facts, who had measured what the future might hold; men, of officer calibre, who were to lead other men in battle.

"Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain?"

Many of them were to enter upon that long, long trail, but they were not afraid, then, of what they would find at the end of it. They had caught, for the moment at least, from that figure of Christ in his radiance, something of the spirit of Victory; they marched, uplifted, in the very presence of their Captain.

Impossible to doubt, after this, that a far different spirit and attitude were animating the hearts and minds of the men, than in the Camp of the previous year. They were alive, awake, and eager. They did not talk much about how they felt in deeper ways. Men together in such circumstances, never do. They took it out in the way in which they did their work. The morale of the Camp was high, and as the majority of the men were considerably above the average in ability and general experience, they often first surprised, then amazed, the Regular Army Instructors by their aptitude, and the rapidity with which they assimilated what they were taught. To the Instructors, it was a brand-new experience to command men of this type in such numbers, and, stimulated by the experience, they in turn responded, and the instruction proceeded at a very rapid pace. The officer candidates varied in age from the early twenties to the middle thirties. Some of them were already officers in the Reserve Corps, but, while these men lived in a separate Barracks and were used to some extent to help in the instruction, their commissions were not safe, and had to be earned all over again; indeed, I can remember one man who started as a Captain of Infantry in the Reserve, and ended as a Second Lieutenant in the Quartermaster Corps, that lowest form of military life! Other candidates, while not in the Reserve, had been Officers in the National Guard, and had been on the Mexican Border the previous summer. They annoyed us a great deal, for, from the heights of their experience, they were constantly holding forth as to how things had been done, in this way or that, on the Border; some of them made the mistake of telling all this to the Regular Army Instructors, who responded in the manner

to be expected, with the result that the entire National Guard caste soon relapsed to its proper level in the scheme of things, where individual ability and adaptability, as evinced at the moment, alone counted. A number of the candidates were very young men, who were certain to be called later in the draft in any event, and who, as long as they had to go anyway, wanted to go as officers. Then there was a leaven of somewhat older men, who had convictions about the War, and were in for that reason; some of them, indeed, had already seen service overseas as War correspondents, ambulance drivers, or actually in the Allied Armies, and, now that the United States was in, had returned home to get commissions in our Army and to go at it again. A mixed lot, but a highly interesting one. The shirkers had no chance; some of those left us early in the game. Some were discharged, too, for physical or other inability to stand up to it. Some few men never did get along, spent a miserable three months, and were simply not commissioned at all at the end. But they were very few, relatively, and the level of general attainment and efficiency was so high, and the spirit of mutual co-operation and of willingness to help the other fellow to put his best foot forward was so general, that the atmosphere was stimulating and exhilarating in the extreme.

I have said that men, especially younger men, do not talk easily about their deeper feelings and convictions in such circumstances, and it is true. But the deeper those convictions and feelings, the more surely would they express themselves in outer actions and in chance words, so that those men gradually began to stand out among the others. Then, little by little, in the nature of things, they naturally gravitated together, and formed a centre or a nucleus. In spite of the high morale, or, rather, probably because of it, there was a steady stream of grousing when things went wrong, of grumbling, of complaint at antediluvian methods; this was entirely healthy, a mere working-off of steam, and is always present in the Army, and means in general exactly nothing at all. But, in the circumstances in which we found ourselves, it did mean that individual needs or weaknesses often became apparent in this way, and it was possible to meet and correct them, by degrees, with tact and understanding; to try to turn tendencies in individuals, which might have become destructive later on under the pressure of war conditions, into constructive forces, for the good of the Service. This could not be done by abstract lecturing, but only by the effort to be all things to all men; by talking with them in their own terms, by trying to raise the general inner level. I was personally greatly aided in this sort of effort by something which happened after we had been in Camp for several weeks. Five of us, all older men, were summoned to report one evening at the Quarters of our Commanding Officer. He informed us, after telling us to say nothing to anyone about it, that we would all be commissioned at the end of the Camp in the higher grades (the highest of which was the grade of Major). The reason, he said, why we were being told this at that time, was because he himself felt in need of the assistance and co-operation which he knew we could give, not only in the administration of the Company, but also in arriving at a proper and fair estimate as to the capabilities and characters of some of the younger men, which we would be

better able to appraise in certain ways than he himself possibly could. Then and there we were asked to give our views in regard to at least twenty men, and in most cases not only were those views practically unanimous, but they frequently coincided with the judgment which our Commanding Officer had already formed. This fact encouraged him greatly, and stimulated us; we realized at once that we were all going to see eye to eye, and that there were great possibilities in the situation for co-operation in the most real sense; and that the Commanding Officer, working in his way with us, would insure turning into efficient officers some of those younger men with whom we had already been working as individuals. From that time on, a certain amount of unobtrusive disciplinary authority was vested in us five men. We had the power to award, or to withhold for cause, passes to leave Camp on Saturdays for the night. We alternated in the command of platoons, which gave us the opportunity of studying the men more intimately, and of checking each other's judgment. There is no place where rumour is more rife; where things become known, or partly known, more rapidly than in the Army, in spite of all precautions. We became vested, through rumour, with far more power and authority than we possessed, but this was in fact not at all a bad thing, for it enabled us, in talking with individuals, to speak with some measure of actual authority, and increased our opportunities to help others.

Stimulating and exhilarating as the life was, it was hard work. Not so much physically, for after a month of it, we were in better bodily condition than we had been in for years. It was the pace that was so fast. No pressure of circumstances in civilian life had ever forced us to such continuously intensive living as this. Yet it was never too hard, for it always seemed possible, by an effort of will, consciously to break through the level upon which one was functioning to a higher level, upon which one got a sort of second wind after a hectic day or so, and from which one never again wished to recede. We made mistakes, plenty of them. We were terribly ignorant of the elementary details of what Julius Cæsar called the art of war and the drawing up of heavy armed troops, of details which had been second nature to our Instructors for years. There was no opportunity to exercise individual initiative in these respects; we had simply to learn, and memorize facts and Regulations; in this way were things done and no other; that method was right, any other method was wrong. Now, at the age of thirty-five, it is exceedingly difficult to memorize long pages of instructions rapidly; but, as a matter of fact, this was absolutely necessary, especially in the Infantry training, and we recognized it. The Artillery candidates were greatly handicapped in their instruction by the fact that they had no guns at all, and only a few horses, and, as a result, most of the knowledge which they acquired was theoretical and came from books and lectures. But, as Infantry, we were completely equipped, with modern rifles and the heavy pack. We had an immense Parade Ground for close order company drill, and with a Company of two hundred and fifty men, it was possible to treat the Platoons as Battalions, and to gain considerable knowledge of how to drill the Battalion itself. We had the hills and the rolling country near the Camp for extended order drill, where we

deployed and worked out tactical problems with blank ammunition. We had our trenches and barbed-wire entanglements, interspersed with bags of straw to represent Germans, which we took by assault with the bayonet. We had the rifle and pistol ranges, where quite a high degree of efficiency in shooting was developed. We had practice in military map-reading, and in making military maps ourselves, being sent out individually for this purpose to map a certain area. As the training progressed, many of us were given the entire Company, in turn, for, say, half an hour at a time, under varying circumstances and conditions, that we might have the opportunity of exercising the functions of command. All the facilities to make it possible really to learn our jobs were ours. To make proper use of these facilities, we had to learn the fundamental, rudimentary facts upon which that use was based,—and we learned them; though with groanings that, unfortunately, were sometimes uttered. For we recognized the fact that we could attain something then and there which was going to be essential later overseas; we believed even then that the stalemate of trench warfare on the Western Front could not last, and that before a decision could be reached there ultimately, open warfare, the war of movement, the kind of thing that our own Regular Army knew something about, and that we had a chance to learn about ourselves on the hills around Plattsburgh, was going to come into its own.

Time passed swiftly, one day of intense activity succeeded another with lightning rapidity, and before we knew it, the end of the Camp was in sight. As a matter of fact, the pace had been so fast, that the entire command began to go stale after the last month of instruction had started, and orders were issued to ease off on the training in various ways for a few days, to allow all concerned to get their breath again. This temporary let-up produced the desired result, and was a very wise move, as it enabled everyone to make a strong finish, and to leave in the very best possible condition, from every point of view, to take up the real work for which all this had been merely a preparation. Various events of that last month were more amusing in retrospect than they were at the time. I remember an over-night hike, eight miles down the macadam road beside the Lake, to a large field bordered by a small stream, where the New York Regiment spent the night under shelter tents, marching back to Plattsburgh the following morning. We started off at two o'clock on an exceedingly hot afternoon. The sun, beating down all day on the road, had softened it and brought the tar to the top, so that the surface was just sticky enough to hold the sole of the shoe back when a step forward was taken, and make it rub against the foot. As a result, more than half of the command had blisters on their feet when they arrived at the camping ground, and every available minute, between then and the start the next day, was spent sitting with their feet in the stream trying to cool them off. The worst of it was that those same feet had to be used for the eight mile march back, with the result that there were more blisters, and the old ones were raw. The theory back of this entertainment had been, that it would be helpful for us to have the experience of cooking for ourselves in the open. The proper rations were issued, and we had the necessary equipment, but the trouble was

that the great majority knew nothing whatever about cooking, and subsisted for two meals mainly on raw bacon, uncooked potatoes, and water. A thoroughly poor time was had by all. Once a week, for several successive Saturdays, we were inoculated for practically every known disease, in turn. Some men suffered no ill effects whatever; but the majority would run a slight temperature by the evening, and feel generally wretched for about twelve hours, after which the effects gradually wore off, and they would be entirely fit again when work started early Monday morning. But this diversion, which the Government so kindly provided for us at no expense, militated against our enjoyment of the week-ends; for by that time Plattsburgh, socially, was a very different place from the early days in May. The Hotel down the Lake had opened, families and friends had made their appearance, and it was possible, not only to get a square meal amid pleasant surroundings and under enjoyable conditions, but also to hear, from older men who were really informed, about the progress of the preparation which was being made in Washington for our military effort.

As the end of the Camp approached, it was essential to weigh and to analyze the experience of the past weeks, in the effort, not only to profit by errors of omission and commission, but also to see what one had to go forward with, what one had really learned in the truest and deepest sense. It had been difficult for me, for instance, to report unfavourably about men who had really tried hard and sincerely; to feel myself forced to say that, in spite of all their efforts, and of satisfactory performance of duty they were entirely unfitted, because of some inherent weakness in character, to lead other men. But it was a question of the lives of others, which would be entrusted to them later on if they were commissioned, and of the honour of the Army. Clearly it was a test, as far as I was concerned, of real impersonality, of real detachment. Clearly those two qualities lay at the very heart of the soldier spirit; one would be called upon to make use of them constantly in the future; one would be required later on, again and again, to estimate other men accurately and quickly, and to act at once upon that appraisal; there would be no time then for a leisurely consideration. It was obvious, too, that men who were unfit to lead had to be protected from themselves; it would be grossly unfair to them, through one's own failure to face the facts from false sentiment or a mistaken idea of giving them their chance, to cause them to be placed in positions in which they would inevitably break down later, with possibly attendant disgrace. If men did not know the military value of self-control, if they could not control themselves, clearly they were not going to be able to control those under their command. Yet there was comfort in the thought that, in spite of present failure, they were going to have another chance, and that the disappointment of to-day might well prove to be their making in the long run; for most of them were young men, who would be called later in the draft. It would be possible for them, then, to learn self-control, self-command, in terms of the military life, in terms which they could understand, which they would have to understand. It would be possible, once having learned these things in those terms, to get, perhaps, in another life, the idea of discipleship, to work them out in terms of discipleship. With this realization

came the reminder that, not only for them, but also for those of us who were in the Movement, difficulties and hardships and disappointments were always opportunities, and always would be. Certainly in the military life, in so far as it had opened up, this was true, and it was clear that, in all probability, the future was going to be full of opportunities!

It was the intention, at this First Officers' Training Camp, to draw from each Infantry Training Company of two hundred and fifty officer candidates, the commissioned personnel, up to the grade of Field Officer, for a regiment of Infantry in the 77th Division, which was to be organized at Camp Upton on Long Island, and was to be filled with the draft from New York. The Colonel, the Lieutenant Colonel, and the three Majors were to be Regular Army officers; we were to fill the other grades. Accordingly, at the very end of the Camp and after we had been commissioned, several of us were asked to meet together and, acting upon this information and upon our knowledge of each other, to draw up a provisional roster of the commissioned personnel of our regiment, which would, of course, be subject to revision by higher authority. Armed with the latest Tables of Organization of an infantry regiment, we spent an entire afternoon at this, and after we had given ourselves and each other what we considered were good jobs, grouping ourselves as far as possible as Company Commanders in the same battalions, we distributed the others, who were not present, throughout the various units, with a due regard to preserving a desirable balance of ability and efficiency in each. We were greatly pleased with ourselves when we had finished, feeling that we were now all set to get on with the War, and fondly hoping, so little did we still know of the way in which things are really done in the Army in war time, that this effort of ours was to be the last word on the subject, and that, after the two weeks' leave to which we were now entitled, we should meet again at Camp Upton and all carry on together. The final event of the Camp was a Dress Parade, when we were reviewed by various notables, and received considerable applause from a Parade Ground lined with spectators. After which, and not without a feeling of regret that this phase was over, in spite of my eagerness for what the future had in store, I took the train for New York, a Captain of Infantry in the new National Army.

CENTURION.

(To be continued)

It is not so much the size of the dog in the fight, as the size of the fight in the dog.—E. J. YOUNG.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Recorder asked for comments on the Convention. Generalities, such as "splendid", "a great success", were the only result. Then the Philosopher explained: "I object", he said, "to talking for publication when adequate comment would oblige one to go beneath the surface. The surface of the Convention was most satisfactory; what lay beneath the surface was even better,—but what that was, sceptics would not understand, and it is a mistake to speak of spiritual realities to those whose experience does not include them."

"I should like to explain this", said one of the editors of the QUARTERLY: "The report of the Convention in the next (July) issue must necessarily be incomplete, because, owing to extraordinary political conditions in some European countries, it would be unwise to mention the presence of certain delegates, or even to print the letters of greeting received from Branches or groups of students in those countries. In fairness I should add that the members involved are willing to take the risk; but it is our duty to protect them so far as possible, and to think, not only of present conditions, but of what might happen in the event of war. There are one or two South American republics where men of European birth are 'marked' by their compatriots as 'traitors', when such men do not adopt the particular form of patriotism, favoured by the majority."

"I wish very much", the Historian now volunteered, "that one or two current events had precipitated, so to speak, shortly before instead of after the Convention. First, on May 8th, at Philadelphia of all places (I am quoting from *The New York Times* of May 9th):

> Without a dissenting vote the national convention of the Young Women's Christian Association gave its support to Birth Control legislation. . . . This was the first time that the Y. W. C. A. had accorded official recognition to the Birth Control movement. . . . Considerable surprise was expressed when the delegates, numbering nearly 1800, voiced no opposition.

"I wish we might have had the opportunity to comment, at our Convention, on the performance of those 1800 women,—on their repudiation of religious principles and of natural law. Of all the brutalizing, soul-destroying influences in modern life, Birth Control is among the worst. The frequency of divorce, which has become a national scandal, is one of its direct results. The action of the Y. W. C. A. proves that their use of the word 'Christian' is a mockery; that they have aligned themselves with the forces of moral libertinism; that they must be counted hereafter as enemies of everything for which we stand. That there are decent women among them I do not question for a moment. It is the old story of mob psychology; of the fear, which many women share, of seeming 'old-fashioned'. Some hard-boiled woman doctor shouts at them about their 'rights', jibes at them for their ignorance of 'science', almost suffocates them

with filthy detail, browbeats them into a distrust of their own instincts, until whatever refinement and delicacy they may naturally possess are submerged by a sense of helplessness and fatality. Even so, they cannot escape the most terrible responsibility for the degradation of married life, not to speak of unmarried life, of which their cowardice is the direct cause. If they still believe in a Day of Judgment—and the trouble is that few of them do—they would do well to think of such things,—now. Their organization in any case, which, like the Girls' Friendly Society, has been going down hill for years—religion pushed out as materialistic modernism has been poured in—may as well realize that its latest pronouncement will force everyone who has the welfare of young girls at heart, to steer them as far as possible from its baneful influence.

"Another current event which would have served to illustrate one of the topics touched on at the Convention, is the recent persecution of Andrew W. Mellon, who was Secretary of the Treasury in three Republican Administrations. I have never come into contact with him, directly or indirectly, so I do not speak as a friend, or even as an admirer—for personally I think he showed wretched judgment under President Hoover during the 'boom' which collapsed in 1929. The fact remains that the procedure of the present government against him ought to have brought this country to its feet in a roar of indignant protest. His only actual offence was his wealth, taken in conjunction with his political affiliation. The radicals in Washington hate him, and did their utmost to injure him, solely for that reason; and because Theosophy stands for justice to rich and poor equally; because members of The Theosophical Society are or ought to be passionate lovers of justice 'without distinction of race, creed, sex, *caste* or colour', it would have been very much in order if our committee on resolutions had expressed themselves freely and frankly against the iniquitous misuse of governmental power of which the persecution of Mr. Mellon is an instance. As, however, this was not possible—for the matter did not come to a head until after our Convention—I want to 'read into the record' for publication in the 'Screen', a protest by Samuel Harden Church, President of the Carnegie Institute, which he telegraphed to *The New York Times* on May 8th from Pittsburgh, as follows:

> The action of the grand jury in exonerating Andrew W. Mellon from the attempt of the government to make him a criminal without the privilege of having a hearing and making an argument in defending the honesty of his income tax return will gratify every impartial mind in this country.
>
> In seeking to justify his assault upon Mr. Mellon's character, Attorney General Cummings made the announcement that it is his policy to present to each citizen the government's tax claim, and if the full amount of that claim is not paid without any further discussion of the matter a criminal indictment will be demanded.
>
> The cool, calculating villainy of this statement has shocked America, and in attempting to enforce such a ruthless policy the government has jeopardized the liberty of every citizen. The action of the government in Mr. Mellon's case is a shame and an outrage, and the responsibility for this unpardonable act of tyranny must rest directly upon President Roosevelt.

"A third event worth noting would have been two front-page, large-type headlines in *The New York Times* of May 31st. One of these announced: '*Roosevelt*

hails New Unity in Nation. . . . "All Brothers now in a New Understanding", he tells Auditors'; the other announced: *'Textile Strike is Imminent; Steel Walkout Threatened.'* Worthy of Mrs. Eddy! But I wondered if many people saw the point."

"My contribution is not modern, but ancient", the Engineer commented. "I am reading *Tibet, Past and Present*, by Sir Charles Bell. Yesterday I came across a passage in which the author states that toward the end of the eighth century, Mu-ni Tsem-po, King of Tibet, decided there must be a New Deal. Some men were poor, others rich; this was wrong. He ordained, therefore, that all men should share equally in the wealth of the country. So an equal division was made. Much to the King's annoyance, the equality soon disappeared. Twice again all were made to share and share alike; but the inequalities became worse than before, because some were idle and some industrious, some had brains, others none, while many of those who had been both poor and indolent became more indolent during their interval of ease, and thus became poorer than ever.

"The upshot? After the King's third attempt, his mother poisoned him."

"Really?" exclaimed the Student: "almost too good to be true,—particularly the *coup de grâce!*"

"Read it for yourself; it is all in Bell's book."

"Mothers are not what they used to be", the Historian pronounced, with what he intended to sound like a groan.

"Just as well for some of us perhaps!" the Recorder injected.

"If a violent change of subject be allowable", the Student now said, "may I suggest that it would be a kindness to members of the Society in Germany if some light might be thrown on their duty in the very difficult political conditions confronting them."

"Why more difficult than the position of some of us here?" the Engineer asked. "My company sports the Blue Eagle, or whatever the animal is (it looks like a crow), which is supposed to signify that we are co-operating under the terms of the National Recovery Act (NRA); and we *are* co-operating, for the simple reason that we cannot possibly do otherwise: but this does not mean that we approve of all or any of its provisions. As a matter of fact we do not approve—very few business people do; but this is no new experience, seeing that more than half the laws in force, both State and Federal, are vote-catching devices, and are inherently wrong and asinine. No matter what country, or under what form of government you live, you have to decide, in the last analysis, whether it is your duty to remain there or not; and at that stage it is well to remember that 'the duty of another is full of danger'."

"I am glad you brought that out", commented the Ancient, "for the tendency of German members will be to demand uniformity of opinion and conduct among themselves. None of us can escape entirely from the influence of heredity and environment, and a German member, without realizing it, will instinctively resent any departure from the rhythm of his own goose-step. He will want to say: One, Two, Three—March! expecting his fellow-members to fall into line

with him. I say this in all kindliness. My desire is to help; not to criticize: but the only way to help is to point out those tendencies which are obvious to everyone except to those who are in danger of being dominated by them.

"The German people as a whole have been brought up and educated on the basis of the 'categorical imperative'; they expect a dogmatic answer to all questions—a stereotyped answer, narrow, precise, but of universal applicability. This is something that Theosophy never will or can supply,—any more than Christ, or Gautama Buddha supplied it. Theosophy reveals the underlying principles of right thought and conduct, but leaves it to the individual to apply those principles to his own problems. There could be no spiritual growth if all our problems were solved for us in terms of an infinitely detailed Code which we simply had to obey. The Pharisees had such a code, and we know what happened to them.

"The English approach to things is the exact opposite of the German. It is epitomized in those lines by Kipling: 'There are five-and-forty ways of writing tribal lays, and every single one of them is right.' The idea is vitally important and essentially true; its danger is that it may lead to everlasting compromise, and, at its worst, to the feeling that 'nothing really matters'—a fatal weakness.

"But we are now considering the problem, or the need, of German members, and not only of those who live in Germany. I should say that their greatest need is to refrain, *with all their hearts*, from sitting in judgment on each other, and then, if they would atone for the sins of their nation and race; if they would fill the part of the ten righteous men who might have saved Sodom and Gomorrah,—let them cultivate humility, that true humility, supremely exemplified by H.P.B. and Judge, the only force that can neutralize the self-assertion and arrogance, and at the same time the timidity (a seeming paradox), which are so largely responsible for the fact that Germany has sold itself to the devil—for power."

"Now you've hit it", said the Student; "I mean, have hit upon what seems to be the radical difference between the position of German members and our own. We know that our Government is capable of every kind of folly, and even of wrong; but we know also that its intentions are not evil, and that it is not hatching some hideous plot suddenly to pounce on Canada or Mexico, for revenge, lust of power, or from jealousy. The German members, on the other hand, cannot fail to realize that their Government, with ninety-five per cent of the population, have no scruples, no conscience, and would seize the territory of any of their neighbours to-morrow, if it were thought reasonably safe to do so. Can it be right to remain the citizen of a country which so obviously has become an instrument of the Black Lodge?"

"That is exactly what German members have to decide for themselves, and what we cannot decide for them. If we were foolish enough to advise them (which is just what a novice would be likely to do), we should not only deprive them of the merit of right (that is, of conscientious) decision, but should necessarily take the consequences or Karma of our advice upon ourselves and—far more important—upon the Society. Further, as I have suggested already, one

man's duty, in similar but not quite the same circumstances, may be and often is entirely different from the duty of another. 'Judge not, that ye be not judged'. *We* shall not judge *them;* it remains to be seen if they have a sufficient understanding of Theosophy to act on the same principle as between themselves. When will people learn that it is the motive that makes an act black or white, rather than the act itself! For example: one man arms in defence of his wife and children; another man arms in order to attack them; Pacifists see no difference, or pretend to see no difference, between the action of the two men; Theosophy, which is synonymous with enlightened common-sense, sees all the difference in the world. In the same way, two men might leave Germany, one with a bad and the other with a good motive. It is impossible to judge their behaviour on the basis of their outer conduct only, and heaven alone knows what mixture of motives may be actuating them."

"But if we cannot judge on the basis of outer action, and if it be so difficult to see into motives, what ground can you have for saying that Germany has 'sold herself to the devil—for power'?" One of our visitors asked this question.

"Ground enough,—acres and miles of ground", laughed the Engineer; "that of the statements poured forth during the past year or more, by Germany's 'leaders and official heads',—statements greeted with rapturous applause by an immense majority of the German people. When a man hangs out a sign announcing that he is a burglar, you may think him cracked, but you would be unwise to leave your watch on his doorstep; and the truth is that Germany glories in being a law unto herself, with a right to everything she can wrest from those who prove themselves weaker than she is. 'Might makes right', is her declared creed,—the changeless creed of 'that old serpent, called the Dragon, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world.' "

"I wonder whether readers of the QUARTERLY tire of our constant references to humility", the Historian now said; "I wonder if they regard our 'predications' on the subject as pious counsels of perfection, without practical importance, and as having no bearing in any case on occultism, or on a man's ability to be of use to the Movement and to the Lodge. On the chance that some feel that way about it, I should like to make this challenging assertion: that of the ten million 'known dead' of the Great War, half that number lost their lives through vanity (lack of humility),—and not necessarily their own: far from it. Obstinacy, be it remembered, is a form of vanity; and if a man makes a plan, and sticks to it just because it is *his* plan—sticks to it regardless of changed conditions, or of the warnings of friends—with the result that many thousands of lives are lost, it is clear to my mind that the loss of life was caused by his vanity, and that if he had been humble of heart, and *therefore* open-minded, those who were killed, might be alive to-day.

"No one can study the literature of the Great War—or of any other war for that matter—without being struck, time after time, by instances of scandalous waste of life due to this factor. Take, for example, the Boer War of 1899-1902: Sir Redvers Buller, appointed to command the British forces on the outbreak of hostilities, left England for South Africa on October 11th, the British War Office

thinking it probable that the Boers would be wiped out and that the war would be over, before he arrived; that Sir George White, with his sixteen thousand men in Natal, might easily settle the whole thing. Yet the War Office had an Intelligence Branch, headed by Sir John Ardagh, which had prepared two volumes on the military and other resources of the Boer Republics, and which had advised the War Office that 200,000 men would be required. When these two volumes were sent to Buller before his departure, he returned them within an hour, with the message that he 'knew all about South Africa'. The result was, of course, that he led his armies into one mess after another, at Colenso, Spion Kop and elsewhere, and that Lord Roberts, with Kitchener as chief of staff, had to be sent out as commander-in-chief before the end of the year. It would have been impossible to teach Buller anything. He was not what is ordinarily called a vain man, but thought he knew it all, or, rather, that he knew as much as was necessary, and certainly ten times as much as any civilian,—and there were innumerable civilians in South Africa, of British birth, who knew Boer strategy and tactics, and the personnel of the Boer command, as well as the Boers themselves.

"I should explain, perhaps, that I get my statement about Buller's rejection of those two volumes of laboriously garnered Intelligence, from Winston Spencer Churchill's *My Early Life;* but I happen, independently of Churchill, to know a good deal about that war, and about the leading men on both sides. On the Boer side, General Botha, a very forceful and able man, a great statesman and patriot as well as a great general—undoubtedly the greatest man South Africa has produced—was astonishingly humble; not only unpretentious and free from egotism, but with a mind perpetually open, and as willing to learn from his enemies as from his friends, from his subordinates as from his seniors. Cronje on the other hand, also a Boer—you may remember his final surrender at Paardeburg—was at least as obstinate and self-satisfied as Buller. Lack of humility in both cases; and, of the two, Cronje had less excuse because he did not belong to a military caste, except in so far as he was an old man who had fought against Kaffirs all his life, as well as against the British in the earlier war of 1880-81."

"That feeling of caste superiority", the Philosopher commented, "undoubtedly accentuates a man's native tendencies. It is very rare to meet with a doctor of medicine who can be more than good-naturedly tolerant if a layman expresses an opinion about medical matters; and I have no doubt that lack of humility among doctors (I do not exclude surgeons!) is responsible for a large percentage of our death-rate. In other words I agree with you—and we of course are only echoing what every master of the spiritual life has declared—that without humility as foundation, every virtue becomes a poison: generosity, courage, kindliness, even self-sacrifice, inevitably feeding vanity and personal egotism, unless humility be sufficiently developed. On the most practical of grounds, we need to cultivate it by every means in our power."

"Yes", said the Ancient, "and let us refrain from attributing every bright (or less silly) idea that we have, to our Master, as his inspiration, from the

notion that doing so demonstrates our modesty! You laugh; but it is done—and without conscious guile. Oh, it dies hard, that ancient serpent! Sometimes I think it never dies, but merely changes its skin. Yet, as was said at the Convention, Masters are the embodiment of humility, and those who know them say that when some glimpse of this has been revealed, through the compassion of their own Master, the sense of it has left them prostrate, as though their own souls were in the dust, before that infinite, that heart-breaking humility of the infinitely great."

This reference to Masters naturally suggested the subject of chêlaship, and one of our younger members, a visitor on this occasion, was quick to seize his opportunity. "What is the meaning of the statement", he asked, "constantly met with in the literature of occultism, that the path of the chêla is a hair-line, with dangers on either side of him?"

The Recorder turned appealingly to the Ancient, whose interest seemed in any case to be aroused. "I was thinking of that the other day", he responded, "though in terms of analogy rather than directly; but it is only in terms of analogy that the question can be answered, if the answer is to be of any value to those who have not as yet been confronted with the difficulties peculiar to chêlaship. It is a mistake to try to jump our fences before we get to them. However, the principle underlying the statement on which the question is based, is one which all of us need to understand, for it is the same as the Doctrine of the Mean, of Confucius and of Aristotle, and as the doctrine of the Middle Path, as expounded by Buddha.

"A hair-line, with dangers on either side: for instance, if we allow ourselves to be swamped by detail, we shall lose sight of major issues; if we insist upon winning a battle our way or not at all, the probability is we shall be beaten: we shall have erred in the direction of over-rigidity. On the other hand, if we confine ourselves to essentials, and are indifferent to detail, or adopt the attitude that one way of getting there is just as good as another, we may be able to 'muddle through', but the outcome will lack finish and is likely to prove costly. We shall have erred in the direction of over-flexibility. Who will find the happy Mean?

"Take another instance: if we allow ourselves to be upset when things go wrong, we shall lose our judgment and be governed by our nerves; if, on the other hand, when things go wrong, we adopt an attitude of 'philosophic calm', the probability is that we shall lack the energy to set the matter right. Who will find the Middle Path!

"In the same way, conscientiousness is a great virtue; lack of it, a fatal defect; but do not all of us know that conscientiousness can be carried to such an extreme that it cripples a man's usefulness? And here we have a clue to the right solution of our problem, for it would be a serious mistake to suppose that the solution lies in a compromise between two extremes or two opposite tendencies. This is a world of duality, but only in terms of what is *manifest*. The triangle, the trinity, is always present, though ordinarily we see only the two ends of its base. Looking above (or within) for the apex, we shall in time perceive the

Reality, of which the two extremes of the manifested world are distorted reflections. And what causes the distortion is the personal self through which the Real manifests. In other words, in the case of over-conscientiousness, it is the large element of self, in some form or other, which causes the trouble,—perhaps the desire to make it impossible for others to criticize us (futile hope!), or the wish to be able to assure ourselves that we have gone the limit and beyond it,—that we have done more than others would be willing to do. Either *rajas* or *tamas* may govern, according to the temperament. The person who resents interference with his plan, or delay in its execution, and who fights to put it through at all costs, is governed by *rajas;* the person who, in similar circumstances, feebly smiles, and says on general principles and for the sake of 'peace' that to-morrow will do, is governed by *tamas*. It is only the complete elimination of the personal motive—whether fear, or anger, or laziness, or resentment, or vain-glory, or what not—that will enable us to find the Middle Path, the happy Mean.

"Incidentally, the followers of Confucius, with rare exceptions, never understood this; they were the first to defend compromise as an ideal. The same is true of the followers of Buddha, except among those who were mystics. It is Theosophy alone that explains and solves the problem. Can we *ever* be sufficiently grateful for the light that Theosophy throws on all such difficulties! Constantly I think of this: surrounded as we are by death and sorrow and physical suffering; living as we are in a world from which the last appearance of stability has fled, how should we feel, what should we do, if it were not for our knowledge of Theosophy, and for the sacrifice of those who brought that knowledge to us! No other light reveals so clearly, deep in the heart of life, that ocean of compassion in which alone is rest,—within life, but also brooding over it, and which all of Nature feels and worships and yearns toward,—except man, whose mind sees itself as the only good. There is not a flower or a tree, a rock or a bird or an animal that does not know more of God than the mind of man, and, as a rule, the more mind, the less man knows. Until mind has been dominated, as a tool must be dominated, it is, as *The Voice of the Silence* says, 'the slayer of the real' and the source of every woe. *Perception* is the power we need; and the mind, as such, is incapable of that; the mind, at best, is a differentiating and comparing machine. A Master stands, a blaze of glory, pouring out his benediction on man and Nature; and Nature thrills in unison, while man looks at Nature and thinks what he can get out of it, in money or in food.

"Yet we need not be like that. We have within us a glimmer of the radiance of our own Master's being, and where the least of him is, he is entirely. Our desire to find him and to love him, is the striving of his own life within us. If we yield ourselves to that; if we place our hearts beside him, as he dwells there, waiting,—presently we shall see with his eyes, and hear with his ears,—shall see him and hear him, no longer hidden within us, but revealed in all the splendour of his transfigured manhood, in all the beauty of his peace and tenderness and power: the Warrior of God."

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REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Morning Session

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 64, Washington Mews, New York, at 10.30 a. m., on Saturday, April 28th, 1934, by Mr. Hargrove, Chairman of the Executive Committee, who served as Temporary Chairman of the Convention. A Committee on Credentials was appointed, consisting of Mr. H. B. Mitchell, Miss Perkins, and Mr. Kobbé, to confer and report at once.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

Mr. Hargrove: It is my very great privilege and pleasure, on behalf of the Executive Committee, and really on behalf of the soul of the Society, to welcome you all here this morning. I think it must be your experience, as it is my own, that the longer our membership, the greater is our joy in reuniting here annually. We must of necessity grow more and more into the Movement, unless, through our own fault, we grow out of it; and because we grow further into the Movement, our roots grow deeper and deeper into the source from which it sprang.

It is certainly not my expectation that anything unusual will be said or done or seen at this particular Convention. It is hardly credible that we still belong to the generation that looks for wonders and that seeks a sign; but of one thing I am positive,—that the greatest of all possible gifts will be offered to each one of us in our hearts, and that it is for us, individually and collectively, to accept of that gift, to use it, and to *resolve*.

So it is not only an immense pleasure and privilege to be here this morning; it is also a marvellous opportunity, an opportunity which I am sure every one of us will grasp, an opportunity that we shall look back upon with thanksgiving.

It is time for us to entertain the report of the Committee on Credentials.

This Report having been submitted and accepted, and the Committee discharged with thanks, Mr. H. B. Mitchell, President of the New York Branch, was elected Permanent Chairman of the Convention, with Miss Perkins and Miss Chickering as Secretary and Assistant Secretary respectively.

Address of the Chairman

The Chairman: Anyone who speaks here this morning must wish to echo first the words which we have just heard from Mr. Hargrove. I do not think that one can come to these Conventions without finding, uppermost in his heart, the feeling of joy and gratitude that it is his privilege to come. As he reaches the door, and sees the faces of old friends, that feeling deepens. It grows stronger still as he meets new friends, distant members, co-workers in the Movement, whom he may long have known through correspondence, but perhaps never before has seen. Thus from the day itself, from both old friends and new, happiness and gratitude come to us.

But as we enter the room, or stand in the doorway and see these pictures on the walls, of Madame Blavatsky and Judge and our companions of the past, as we look at the shield which bears our seal and motto and think of all they stand for, of the Great of Soul from which they come to us, of the lives laid down that knowledge of Truth might live and grow, something deeper than gladness rises in us, and our hearts are uplifted in a salute to the Corps. The light of the soul's loyalty shines forth, and in it the things of self pass from sight. It does not diminish gladness, but it no longer lets our consciousness be held in thoughts of it. The Corps and the Cause claim all we are, and we face our work and opportunity with the sense of the grave responsibility they entail.

I need not say that in The Theosophical Society each man speaks for himself, and that what he says commits no one else. But because of that fact we are free here, as nowhere else, to voice the truth as each of us may see it. Neither the Society nor any of its members is committed to a belief in Masters because I believe in them, and therefore none can take it amiss when I state the belief, quite simply, that as we come into this room to-day, we come into the presence of the Masters to whom the T. S. owes its existence,—into a post, an outpost, of an ancient Battle-Corps whose battle is our own. Here are our leaders; here the spirit that can quicken in us the power to follow them. Whatever may be our personal feelings, whatever we may do outwardly, our first act inwardly, as we open this Convention, is our salute to the Corps, and our recognition that we stand here to carry on its age-old work.

What is that work? In *Light on the Path* we are told of the link that is formed by those who refuse to be terrified by the greater nature or to be drawn back by the lesser, "a link between man and his divine part, . . . between the stir of the market place and the stillness of the snow-capped Himalayas", between the Lodge of Masters and the world. It is a link between Infinite Compassion and infinite need, and our work is to maintain that link. It is for that our Movement exists. For it, our predecessors lived and laboured and died, and the work and trust which was theirs are now ours. We are their heirs, the inheritors of their victories—and of their warfare. We cannot take the one and leave the other, nor betray the standards they upheld with heroic, patient courage. They gave their all. It is our all they ask of us—of each one of us, our all of love, of devotion, of brooding thought and active work.

Very little things can determine great issues. We all know the stories of the lion and the mouse, of the dropped stitch that unravels the whole fabric, of the battle lost for the lack of a horseshoe nail. A ship's captain lets his finger drop down a line as it moves across the page of his log, thus taking the time of passing one light as the time of passing another, and, through this error, piles his ship upon the rocks. A frightened, half-grown boy sticks to his post, despite his fears, tapping with a finger on a rubber key; and the message goes forth that saves both ship and passengers. It was but a finger's movement in each case—a moment's carelessness, a few minutes of self-dominating fidelity. So we are small, and perhaps can do but little things; yet in the end, great issues may turn upon them. There is a saying in the *Tao-Teh-King* to the effect that the sage accomplishes great things while they are still small, for, "All difficult things have their origins in those that are easy; and great things in what are small. Therefore the wise man can accomplish great things without ever attempting them". So, too, it is recorded of the Christian Master that he prefers to work through the simplest and humblest instruments, in order that the divine power, operating through them, may stand out the more clearly. It does not need great personal attainments, to enable us to serve in the work of the Lodge. Great pretensions belie themselves. All that is asked is the little that we have: that we be faithful: that we give ourselves in complete loyalty, doing our honest best.

To the extent that we do this, to that extent shall we enter into the Theosophical Movement and become a part of the link which it constitutes, the link between the temporal and the Eternal. It is of that that I want to speak to-day; for part of doing our best must be in the giving of our best thought to our opportunities and problems; so that we not only strive to be true to the light we have, but constantly seek clearer light in all that concerns our work. It is of special moment to us to understand the process that operates in our own Movement, whereby the Unmanifest is made manifest, and the unchanging Eternal is revealed in the changes and sequences of time. Through fixity of heart and purpose, through steadfastness and loyalty of will, we have to maintain an enduring current of spiritual force in the midst of the shifting tides of the world, and this work of the Movement can succeed only as it conforms to the principles which everywhere guide the incarnation of Spirit, and determine the pattern in which the Eternal reflects itself in the temporal. It behoves us, therefore, to consider these principles.

They are indicated for us in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine*. There is first the hidden Unity, the Unmanifest, the Root and Cause of all. It is useless to speculate upon this; all that we can do is to point toward it, to use symbols as sign-posts. So, for us, it may be symbolized, or pointed to, by the unity of the great Lodge of Masters,—the unity of spirit that we feel within or above all that comes from them, the overshadowing Movement from which our Movement springs. But once we pass in thought from this hidden Unity to its emanations, from the Unmanifest to the manifest, we find duality supervenes. There is the contrast between form and essence, Spirit (or consciousness) and matter, subject and object. As Mr. Johnston used to remind us, there is no cutting a stick so

short that it will not have two ends. Wherever there is matter there is consciousness, and wherever there is consciousness there is some vehicle to clothe and to express it. These opposites, *The Secret Doctrine* teaches, are of the very essence of manifestation, of "*ex*-istence", of that which comes *out* of Unmanifested Being. Not only does this duality mark all external being; it marks, equally, all external processes. All things move in cycles. The law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, is absolute and universal in the manifested world. Day and night, life and death, sleeping and waking, the beating of the heart, the in-breathing and the outbreathing, the voice that speaks and is still,—only through such alternations, through beginnings and endings, birth and death and rebirth again, does anything endure in the world of space and time.

These fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* are illustrated wherever we look. Few of us could have come here this morning without feeling that behind the manifest lay an infinitely greater Unmanifest, without sensing a Unity behind all diversity. You may not be able to define what you felt; but you none the less felt it. The heart can lay its hold upon unity where the mind cannot function, and there is something here which we can love, though we cannot describe it. It is the true Theosophy, the spirit of the Lodge, the atmosphere of "our Father's house". It is in the air, in the walls, in the ceiling and floor; and its presence illustrates also the second principle of which *The Secret Doctrine* speaks, the indissoluble association of spirit and matter. The whole place, the tables, the chairs, the pictures on the walls, the very bricks of the fireplace, are stored with all that has lived and been lived in this room. There is nothing dead, nothing unconscious here. The force and life and consciousness which animate the Theosophical Movement, live here, pulsing, as though they were a living substance, in the air about us, carrying our past over for us into the present.

How does it do this? Outwardly there have been many changes; but inwardly it has remained the same. Voices which we once heard outwardly, we now hear only in the silence. New comrades smile a greeting to us; new photographs have been hung upon the walls; and yet within and above the change there is that which is unchanged, which endures the same, and upon which, as beads upon a string, all changes find their place. Inwardly there is that fixed, undeviating current of spiritual life and love and will, which is the Theosophical Movement, its very changelessness producing change in all it contacts or through which it acts. Can we not see that this must be so? That the immutability and constancy of spirit, its eternal unity, can *manifest* itself only through change in form and circumstance—as continuous, unchanging motion can manifest itself only through continuous change in place? In the things of the spirit, the Eternal is immanent in the temporal, even as it is transcendent. Let us remember what Krishna told Arjuna: "I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate." There is the transcendent, overshadowing spirit of Theosophy, the single, undivided will and spirit of the great Lodge, always acting, always here, always the same. But it must show itself in a thousand different forms and ways, in beginnings and endings, in silence and in speech; and we

must learn to look through these changing forms to that which is fixed and permanent within them; to see the immortal within the mortal; and then to face and understand and accept the mortal—to accept change.

Let us pause, for a moment, to consider in a broader view this law of cyclic change that characterizes all manifestation. The theosophic view of evolution is not that ordinarily taken by science. Science looks only to the sequence of forms. We look to the spirit that moulds and animates the form, that uses it as its vehicle and vesture. We see the whole material world evolving from the immaterial world,—as speech evolves from thought, and thought from contemplation. To us, life flows from within; science too often presents it as though it were but a reaction to what lay without. Yet it is illuminating to view, as science views, the background against which life is lived, the external circumstances in which science would have us believe life arose and evolved. Our earth is but one of our sun's planets, and our sun but one of many myriads of suns, radiating their heat and light and magnetism, and unknown subtile essences and influences, into space. Through the whole cosmos everything is in motion, pulsing, revolving, flaming. Nothing is still. The planets revolve around the suns; turn on their own axes, presenting first one face to the sun and then the other; drawing nearer and then retreating again; causing day and night, winter and summer; opening themselves to the radiance that is the source of their life, and then shielding themselves from it, in cyclic alternation of indrawing and outgiving.

Nowhere in the environment or conditions of life is there any escape from such cyclic alternations. We think of the evolution of animal life from aquatic forms, on the shores where tides rise and fall. It is not always water there, nor always air. The clams are left uncovered as the tides recede, to be covered again as they advance. Or consider any department or aspect of our own physical life: our breathing, the diastole and systole of the heart, the taking of food and the elimination of waste. We eat, but we cannot be always eating. There must be time given for the assimilation of our food, for the transformation of its constituents and the sublimation of its energies. So with our mental life: we must take in and give out. We listen, but we cannot be always listening. We speak, but we cannot be always talking. We have to digest what we hear. We have to think, that we may speak intelligently; and to contemplate, that we may think intelligently. In every manifestation of life there is the same cyclic rhythm, the same alternation of opposites, birth and death and birth again, beginnings and endings which are neither beginnings nor endings, but the way whereby the one unchanging current of spiritual being manifests itself in time.

It is not always easy to see and accept change as the vesture of the Unchanging, but could we do so it would free us from the greater part of our burden of grief and fear. "Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears"; so this teaching of the law of cycles is, as we have seen, placed at the very foundation of our philosophy. We shall gain in every way if we can really comprehend it. For the truth of the matter is this: that it is precisely when some gift we have had is withdrawn, so that it seems we have it no more, that it is made our own. We have to learn to find, in denial, the gift of the thing denied.

Does it sound too wild a paradox, a mere juggling with words? Think again of the illustrations we have used. On the face of the planet, one hemisphere, we say, is in the light, the other in darkness; the first is receiving from the sun and drawing what it receives into itself; the second is giving forth what it has received—sometimes we say losing what it has received. But light and heat are expanding, radiating things; they are a going forth of their source, not an absorption. Therefore on the side of the planet where it is day, it is not the true nature of light which is experienced, but rather its complement. There the planet is receiving, whereas the sun is giving. It is only as the planet turns, and this bright side ceases to be bright but becomes dark in the turning of the cycle, that the gift which it has received and stored away begins to assert its true influence and to live out its own nature, radiating into the cold and darkness that surround it. It is not in the day, but in the night, that the earth acts as does its parent the sun, that the gift which it receives from the sun is consummated. So it is with the breath drawn into the lungs. The inbreathing is but half the process, impotent and useless if it stood alone; the purification and oxygenation of the blood need the outbreathing for their completion. Wherever we look we see that the denial is as necessary as the giving, for the completion of the gift.

If we understand this, we face manifested life very differently from the way in which the world is alone able to face it. To believe in the law of cycles as a universal law, is of necessity to believe in reincarnation and to recognize that death cannot be the end. But it is not the fact of a coming rebirth that is of greatest moment to us. What I would emphasize is that what we call life and death are but two phases of one continuing being, the two opposite poles of the duality which marks all manifestation, the cyclic heart-beat through which the Eternal lives in the temporal. Each the reverse of the other, each the denial of the other, each the complement of the other, each confirming the other, they together form one whole. Truly time and space are nothing but devices to make manifestation possible; means whereby, alternately, the opposite aspects of being may be held back in order that the other may be experienced in consciousness, and so both become known and given their full part in the whole.

Think of a tale of adventure, or a drama! There must be suspense, uncertainty, risk. Always the known must stand in contrast to the unknown; achievement must be won by struggle,—Easter be reached through Good Friday. Neither is understandable without the other; but also, to be understood, each must be separated from the other, otherwise, in our consciousness, each would neutralize the other. Heat and cold together make us neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm,—a dead, a neutral thing, to be spewed from the mouth of reality. After we have read the story and closed the book, it all can live in its totality before us,—in its lights and shadows, its suspense and certainties, its joy and pain. But it could never have *entered* consciousness in that way. It is only by means of some such device as that of time, which, through successive denials, permits us to experience the innate opposites of being, not simultaneously but successively, that we can know being to the full,—that all its richness can become manifest.

Time, therefore, through the law of cycles, with the denials and limitations it enforces, is one of the basic instruments of manifestation. Space fulfils a like function—the function of separation. "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed . . . which indeed is the least of all seeds", so that it scarcely takes up space at all. All its potentialities, the astral mould, the latent energies, are packed away, invisible. But plant it, and they begin to unfold, to manifest; and manifestation involves separation of qualities, and separation takes up room, occupies more and more of space. There is the development of roots and of sprouting branches. Unmanifest, they are one, indistinguishable within the seed; but manifest, they must be separated in space; the one pressing to the light and air, the other to the dark moisture of the soil. Separation, whether of time or of space, is basic to manifestation. The roots and the branches can no more be together in space than the bud and the blossom, the fruit and the seed, can be together in time. Where each is, the others must be denied, but in that denial find their completion.

To-day the world is intolerant of denials. The outstanding feature of the past hundred, or hundred and fifty years, is the breaking down of barriers of every kind. Science, the popular science of the newspapers, brays that it has broken down the barriers of time and space; Democracy, that it has levelled those of caste and birth, and, it might add, of character and ability. We are asked to "think internationally". The Chinese wear derby hats. American society has aped the dances and music of the African jungle. Everywhere there is "confusion of castes". Nowhere can privacy be commanded; in the middle of the ocean one can still be called to the telephone. When it took weeks to cross the ocean, the voyage was itself a quarantine against the importation of foreign forms of life that might destroy the balance nature has established in each separate continent. In these days of airplanes there is no such protection, and the risks that this entails are only beginning to be perceived.

In business and finance there has been the same levelling and obliteration of differences. This has more to do with the world-wide economic depression than is generally realized. Trade breaks down when everybody is doing the same things and has the same things. When England wanted ivory from Africa, and Africa wanted brass wire from England, the exchange could be made with profit to both. In Africa brass wire was of exceptional value, in England it was not; but when the standards have become the same, when England manufactures artificial ivory, and Africa real brass wire, trade naturally ends.

A generation or two ago the financial markets of London, Paris, Berlin, New York, and Chicago were separate and different; affected by one another, truly, but more affected each by its own independent influences. If money were scarce in one, it might be plentiful in others; and therefore mutual help could be given and received. Moreover, if a man in St. Louis had money to invest, the probability was that he would invest it in a local enterprise. To-day that is not so. The news of the New York Stock Market's opening and closing is broadcast over the radio and printed in the local papers all over the country. The little farmer invests his savings in the stocks of the "Big Board". The result is that instead of

prosperity depending upon a widely diversified and great number of independent risks, each relatively small, all the eggs have been put into a few very large baskets. An insurance company may safely insure a thousand different lives or houses; but none can safely put its entire capital against a single risk; yet that is very much what the financial world has done. Many risks have been merged into very few; and these such as none can evaluate or foretell, for they depend upon the psychic mood of a whole people, upon mob psychology. All the world's markets receive the same news, by telephone or telegraph, at the same time. They are all subjected to the same influences, and these influences are psychic influences. The unpredictable psychic factor has been enormously increased by popular "education"; and the inventions of modern science have, as it were, wiped out the fire-lanes and break-waters, so that there is nothing to check the forest fires or tidal waves of greed or fear.

That which is so obvious in the external world around us, is equally operative in the moral and mental life of our generation. Everywhere old restrictions have been swept away. Obligations, duties, self-mastery and self-restraint, have become old fashioned terms in contrast to "rights" and "self-expression". All of this is the very opposite of that for which our Movement stands. We seek unity *in* diversity, not in the destruction of diversity. We see each man's fragment of the truth as necessary to the whole; and what we ask of him, above all else, is that he should be true to his own truth. We see barriers and limitations as essential to completeness, repression as essential to force; and we perceive that they can never be dispensed with. The flat levels of unrestraint and uniformity are dead and barren—no part of our ideal. "In my Father's house are many mansions": a house without walls would be no house; surely it could not contain "many mansions". The whole intellectual basis of our Society's activities is found in the fact that Truth manifests in many forms, not in one alone. Theosophy is to be found in Hinduism, in Buddhism, in Christianity, in all the great religions of the world, in a thousand different forms and fragments, each contributing its own special light and colour to an understanding of the whole.

One of my former colleagues at Columbia spent many years of his life collecting snails from a single island in the South Pacific. The formation of the island might be suggested by placing one's hand on the table with the fingers spread,—the fingers representing high rock ridges, the spaces between being fertile valleys. In the valleys the snails thrived, but they could not cross the ridges. Therefore in each separate valley the snails had developed independently, and this development had not been confused or obscured by cross breeding, so that, my colleague told me, every potentiality of the organism had been brought out to the full in one valley or another.

That is what we need to-day in the world and in our own natures,—we need the very limitations which we are most tempted to resent. Pain has lessons to teach us as well as joy; hardship as well as ease. If we take pleasure, instead of duty, as our guide, we must lose hold of the spiritual principles which our life is meant to manifest and to develop. We may grow, but it will be a cancerous growth, without conformity to the inner mould of the spirit, draining the vitality

from our proper development. We who have been taught in the Theosophical Movement should understand this, and see that life is impoverished and not enriched by licence and uniformity; and we should set ourselves to establish and re-create in our own natures, and of our own wills, those necessary denials and limitations by which alone spirit can manifest itself in matter.

As I said before, but would emphasize again and yet again, wherever we look, we see that it is through denial that the gift is made complete and its nature manifest. These flowers on the table, that are beautiful to us in their varied colours, show forth, as that colour, the element of light that they do not themselves absorb,—which they sacrifice, and deny themselves. It is the soldier, who gives his life, who makes life safe for his countrymen. It is the nun who supports the sanctities of the family. It was in the hour of his own desolation, in that cry from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" that Christ poured out upon the world the life and spirit which he felt he no longer received, but which, in that act, united him with the Father in divine and infinite self-giving. Everywhere "the gods are nourished by sacrifice", the spirit gained and revealed in loss.

It has never been claimed that Theosophy is a soothing syrup for the coward and the weakling. This teaching of denial and sacrifice and death is the creed of the warrior, the creed which ought to be pre-eminently ours. If we can make it ours, ours even in the dark shadows of our fears, it will give us the faith and courage to face life undismayed, to accept all the changes which we *have* to accept, either as craven or as hero. Change comes. Death comes. Rebirth comes. Our friends pass from us. One by one our comrades in the Movement pass from the outer world into the inner. We no longer have them by our side; but in that very loss and denial is the opportunity to come closer to them than ever before, as we pick up the work and responsibility that was theirs, but must now be ours. Wherever they may be, they are working in their phase of the cycle as we are working in ours; and in that common work we are together.

This is Kali Yuga, the iron age of darkness, in which the current of life sinks deeper and deeper into matter. The great Lodge of Masters, in their compassion, have poured forth the teachings of the ancient Wisdom, that it might follow that current of life down into deeper, deader levels of consciousness than it ever reached before. Thus we have become its recipients, its trustees, a part of the link between the Lodge and the world, part of the channel through which the needs of the world must be met. We must learn to give as we have received, not something that is mere intellectual theory, but something that is vital because lived. As one must "live the life" to know the doctrine, so, even more, must one live the life in order to pass on the doctrine as a living thing. For this we need courage; and we can draw that courage from the doctrine itself. No less do we need faith; and that, too, is there for us. Could there be better ground for faith than the way in which we have been led through these fifty-nine years of our Society's activities?

So we stand here to-day, to open this Convention, conscious of the Corps, of which, in our own small way, we may be a part; conscious of the creed that is

that Corps' own, and so must be ours as well; not ours to impose upon others, but ours to impose upon ourselves,—resolved to live by it, feeling in our hearts the power to live by it, holding fast to the knowledge that, though in the midst of change, in the temporal sequence of death and birth and rebirth again, yet we are the inheritors of that which is unchanging, immortal and eternal, which it is ours to make our own, and which, through our Movement, must be made to live in the world as the hope and faith and guide of humanity hereafter.

The Chairman then called for the report of the Secretary T. S.

Report of the Secretary T. S.

I have the honour to submit the following Report:

Branch Activities

Since Branches have established the custom of assembling on Convention Day, to unite in mind and heart with this gathering of delegates and members, we cannot think of absent members as distant, but rather of our united desire—to draw lessons from the past year instead of emphasizing its accomplishments, and then, as the result of aspiration during the Convention, to find the key-note for the coming year's work.

In Arvika, Sweden, the Branch consists of long-time members, with a "living interest in the work", who are looking expectantly for recruits to perpetuate their endeavour. The Secretary, Mrs. Fjæstad, makes grateful acknowledgment of help from Headquarters, and is commissioned to send Branch greetings to the Convention. . . . [A passage from the Secretary's Report, although read at the Convention, is omitted here, as it referred to the activities of Branches, Study Classes and members in certain foreign countries where strained political conditions make publicity inadvisable.] The Oslo Branch meets frequently, with good attendance and sustained interest. Whatever the topic of the evening, it is always preceded by an appropriate reading from Cavé's *Fragments*. The Chairman, Mr. Henning Dahl, writes that, following the custom in another Branch, they intend to "remember departed friends and teachers on the dates of their death—thinking of them as living and working for the Cause they loved so much". He adds: "Our inmost wish is to become a *living* Branch on the true Vine, . . . so to live as to prepare the way for one who will live the life in its perfection." The Branch at Gateshead, England, is making steady progress, taking one rung of the ladder at a time. The Krishna Lodge of South Shields, Mr. Mackey writes, is trying to "develop strength, stability, faith, courage and vision". The Newcastle Branch has held regular meetings, with a varied programme for its local members, and has circulated the New York Reports among its numerous corresponding members. The Secretary, Mrs. Cassidy, says that they find Mr. Johnston's "Religion of the Will" throws much light on the problems of the present day, although contributed to the Quarterly in 1908-1909. The members in Whitley Bay are deeply interested in their study of *The Secret Doctrine*. "We have", Mrs. Ross reports, "a very faithful and sincere circle,

who attend regularly, appreciate the help given, and endeavour to understand and carry into effect the teachings of Theosophy." The Norfolk Branch does not assemble, as it is a "corresponding Branch", whose members, unable to meet personally, have therefore had the more practice in an effort to meet at the point of reality. Mrs. Graves, the Secretary, writes that real progress has been made.

The Venezuela Branch of Caracas has been active in various lines of which its delegates will doubtless speak. We shall hear also from the delegates of Hope Branch, Providence, which has been "developing increased gratitude for the theosophical philosophy, deeper sense of personal responsibility, greater harmony". In Toronto, the membership consists largely of men. Mr. Harris writes: "We have felt the result of the general upset of things, but I believe our meetings together have been of real help." The Cincinnati Branch turned, this year, to the devotional side of Theosophy, and every one has greatly benefited by the study of the *Voice of the Silence*. Miss McCormack, the Secretary, says: "Members often come to the meetings tired or depressed and go away with faith strengthened, experiences made more endurable, courage renewed." Middletown is a neighbouring Branch; its members meet at the home of their devoted President, Mr. Roberts; since pioneer days, he and Mrs. Roberts have been connected with the T. S. and have courageously maintained this centre, under conditions often adverse. The Secretary of the Virya Branch of Denver, Miss Mary K. Wallace, writes of their meetings: "The discussions have been spirited, and directly related to the interests of the members. . . . Some especially enjoyed an attempt made to estimate prominent world figures by theosophic standards. Also there has been definite effort to bring the work of those who so faithfully laboured for Theosophy—Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Griscom—to the attention of members who knew none of them personally, and to make those members conscious of the enduring qualities of their effort and sacrifice." Speaking for the Pacific Branch of Los Angeles, Mr. Box reports: "Our main objective and effort have been to stand firmly in the midst of the psychic, emotional mess of things, so to speak, by which we are all surrounded. . . . We have learned that, in time, we reap what we have sown; and that a Branch is made up of the same life, energy, traits and force of character, as those of which its members are made; so that whatever comes from a higher source than they, reaches it *through* them. Thus, for instance, if in the past its public appeal had been largely emotional, instead of toward building and maintaining itself on a more enduring spiritual foundation,—there would be danger of its being carried away on the now swiftly flowing, psychic-emotional tide to which it had thus helped to give rise."

The Theosophical Quarterly

Our magazine admirably serves as the Society's travelling representative, carrying from the heart of the Movement its repeated call to action, and counsels drawn from ripe experience, which are even more explicit and revealing than could be given in personal conference. As we rejoice in the appearance of

younger contributors, we also watch the narrowing circle of older ones, marvelling at the work done by the very few, who labour unceasingly to keep the QUARTERLY's presentation of theosophic standards and principles true to the inner pattern. Fortunately, it has been possible to maintain the library circulation of the magazine, which represents wide scattering of seed,—destined ultimately, we trust, to revolutionize the world by the establishment of spiritual standards. The subscription plan inaugurated, on principle, by the 1932 Convention, has already demonstrated its practical advantages.

Book Department

Demand for the reprinting of some of our books is reminder of the place they fill; there is constant sale for them, though diminished in volume by financial conditions. One means of disseminating *applied* Theosophy is represented by Dr. Torrey's pamphlet, *Science and its Function in Education*, which we had the pleasure of bringing out (at fifty cents per copy); others, dealing with fundamental problems of interest to the general public, may follow.

Secretary's Office

The work has again been done by volunteers, those of former years, and several new ones who have recently made special preparation for the service of the Society. Thanks to the diligence of three members, there is now in the office a card-index of the thirty-one QUARTERLY volumes—and one of the indexers offers to supply the Secretary with information members may desire, as to issues where wanted articles appeared, or designated topics were discussed. The "travelling library", which contains the standard books on Theosophy and several series of articles from the QUARTERLY, not yet published in book form, awaits more general use.

Every Branch has asked that the thanks of its members for much appreciated help, should be expressed to the Editors of the QUARTERLY—for many it is as a lighthouse in the midst of an angry and treacherous sea. They also ask opportunity to speak of their gratitude for the Reports of the New York Branch meetings, which are made possible by two members—one who takes the notes, and another who, from these, produces a spirited miniature of each meeting. We are again indebted to an American member who gives the general T. S. fund a sum in excess of the amount that would be due from European members, had these not been requested to pay their dues by making donation to some form of Allied Relief work. Others might be mentioned who have given generously of time, money or skill, but the closer one comes to the work, the more one appreciates that connection with it in any capacity is a privilege for which one wishes to give rather than to receive thanks. Nature shows that co-ordinated, purposeful growth requires the activity of a strong, controlling centre; and without such a centre the Theosophical Movement could not stand as it does to-day, opposing to general chaos the order and vision of another world. From this centre emanate the understanding, insight and poise that hold work and workers true to their orbits. Fortunate, indeed, is one who, situated like your Secretary

at the cross-roads where currents meet, needs and so receives for the Society's benefit, direction, counsel, training, to which otherwise one would have no claim: it is acknowledged in deep gratitude. With the years, the bonds of a common endeavour and service are more precious, and so I want to thank the Society from my heart for the opportunity given me.

Respectfully submitted,
ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary T. S.

This report was accepted with the unanimous thanks of the Convention to the Secretary and to the Secretary's helpers, after which the report of the Treasurer was called for.

Mr. H. B. Mitchell, as Treasurer T. S., after thanking the Assistant Treasurer, Mr. Kobbé, for having done "all the work of the office", reported a net balance, as of April 28th, 1934, of $4.42. This, he said, would have satisfied Mr. Judge, who did not believe in allowing T. S. funds to accumulate and thus remain idle, especially when there was plenty of money coming in. Members might rest assured, he added, that at no time would the Society be allowed to run into debt, The printing and mailing of the QUARTERLY, which cost $3400. in 1932, had cost $3100. in 1933.

After this report had been accepted with thanks, the Chairman announced the following three committees which he had earlier been authorized by the Convention to appoint:

Committee on Nominations: Mr. Auchincloss (Chairman), Mr. LaDow, Dr. Hohnstedt.

Committee on Resolutions: Mr. Hargrove (Chairman), Dr. Torrey, Mr. González Jiménez.

Committee on Letters of Greeting: Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell (Chairman), Dr. Clark, Mrs. Regan.

The report of the Executive Committee was then called for.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MR. HARGROVE: Mr. Chairman and Fellow Members: as you know, our outer activities do not increase; as you also know, this is not accidental, nor is it due to lack of energy or of membership or of money. It is because we are conforming to the spiritual cycles; it is because we have a better understanding of Theosophy, let us hope, than to try to push against spiritual law. Do you realize, I wonder, that this assembly, for H.P.B., for Judge, would be a marvellous dream come true? Do you realize that they worked and prayed and died for this very thing,—a devoted nucleus, determined to live for the principles and ideals which H.P.B. and Judge brought with them from the Lodge; determined at all costs to be true?

H.P.B. and Judge knew the Law of Cycles: who else brought it to our knowledge? They knew that if the Work inaugurated by them were to survive the turn of the tide at the end of the nineteenth century; if it were to forge its way,

as it has done, into the very heart of the twentieth, then the Society would have to lose in quantity as it gained in quality. This is why, at that earlier period, they worked for quantity: they foresaw the great sifting process which must inevitably take place if a nucleus were to survive.

The great sifting process: all of us, I think, are familiar with the old-fashioned victrola and its revolving plate; and all of us must realize that life is movement, movement life, and that the life of the Theosophical Movement perpetually revolves as it moves forward. Now if you place on a revolving plate a large and light object such as a toy balloon, it will inevitably be thrown off, the more quickly, the more rapid the revolution of the plate; while if the object be as a grain of sand, it will at least have a much better chance to remain on. That is one illustration of the sifting process that has taken place on so large a scale in the past. All members who felt themselves to be big, but who in fact were light, were thrown off. It is only those who, by some miracle, have realized their own insignificance—at least relatively—who have remained on.

H.P.B. and Judge, great as they were—and because they *were* so great—were almost incredibly humble, convinced of their own unworthiness and unfitness to accomplish the work that had been entrusted to them. All of us who knew Judge know that; and of course it is manifest in the life of H.P.B. By contrast, if we look back over the past, we see one member after another disappear into space, shot off by the ever more and more rapidly revolving life of the Movement. It is important that this should be understood, for a variety of reasons.

It is inherent in the theosophical philosophy itself, that there should be Kama Lokic spooks, describing themselves as theosophical societies, in existence at the present time,—as well as The Theosophical Society founded by H.P.B. and Judge and others, representatives of which I am addressing at this moment. Such off-scourings must exist. They are the result of the great sifting process which had to take place if we were to survive.

After all, granting that those who inaugurated the Movement and who carried it on, put the whole of themselves into it—as they undoubtedly did—then they not only transmitted that which came down from above, but they contributed human nature, human nature as it is. That means that they put into the Movement, just as you and I are putting into the Movement to-day, things not only good, but also (to put it mildly) indifferent; and those things, in time, must be sifted out also, if, at last, the pure nucleus is to remain.

What happened? Practically all of us have read the *Occult World* (to go back, for the moment, to the very early days of H.P.B. in India), and while some of us owe a real debt to the author of the *Occult World*—because, after all, he was largely instrumental, though indirectly, in reminding us once more of Theosophy and of the Lodge—yet, great as is our debt, we must realize the author's limitations. That book, as you know, contains letters from the Master K. H. that are of endless value; but the book itself is also made up of observations about phenomena, and so on and so forth, which very clearly demonstrate that Sinnett's centre of interest was in external things. He had no more idea of the inner life than a flatiron. It was on phenomena that he was intent, and anything that he

could drag out of H.P.B. in the way of a sensation—an out and out materialist, if ever there was one. Almost from the first he showed that he was doomed; yet he served his purpose while he lasted, and doubtless will receive his reward, —in spite of his final treachery to H.P.B. He was thrown off that revolving plate, before she died; and she knew it.

Then there came the trouble over Judge. Those who have been thrown off—not by any act of the surviving membership, but always through their own sense of importance, through their own ambition, through their too materialistic and personal approach to divine truth—have all shared certain characteristics. Anyone who knew Annie Besant ought to have realized that she thought Divine Providence lucky when it ran into her. The same attitude has characterized everyone without exception who has failed to cling to the Movement. It always will. John Jay Chapman, a brilliant man with a very independent mind, wrote a book at the outbreak of the War in which he analysed the psychological condition of the German people at that time, describing it as a state of mania, with what we should call the lower nature in control. It is easy to see that the German symptoms, as he records them, have been exhibited also by those who have been thrown out of the Society as a result of swollen personality. First, he says, there was a curious ability to use reason, and then suddenly to lapse into unreason, without recognizing the lapse from reason into unreason; then there was the attitude of dogmatic certitude; thirdly, there was megalomania, a sense of intense self-exaltation. I should like to add on my own account that in Germany, as in the case of the derelicts of the Movement, the persecution mania was a marked symptom. Germany was perfectly sincere at that time in her belief that she was being persecuted by the entire world. Annie Besant (although it is almost incredible) convinced herself that she was being persecuted, although the truth was that she was savagely persecuting Judge. Mrs. Tingley imagined she was hounded by enemies,—a real mania. But all four peculiarities were invariably present, if you go through the list of those who led others astray.

For the reason that the Adyar society is the most notorious of these Kama Lokic spooks at the present time, it is necessary to study it, because, after some of us older people have gone to a better world, you may be confronted with all kinds of arguments for a so-called reunion; and reunion in any form or on any basis would be fatal to the cause of the Lodge. Beware, if you as individuals should take back to yourselves the devils you have expelled. If you have succeeded to any extent in sifting out the worser elements, keep them separate, at as great a distance as possible, on all planes, and never take them home to yourselves as you grow older. Exactly the same thing is true of The Theosophical Society: never let it be tempted, under the plea of reunion or brotherhood, to re-combine with these shells of the past. I must speak very plainly, but also very deliberately, for the sake of the future. We have to safeguard the situation so far as we possibly can.

I doubt if many of you have given time—why should you?—to following the activities of the Adyar society—proceedings and activities so foolish in some cases, that you might well be tempted to suspect me of exaggeration as I speak

of them. I shall not exaggerate: it would be impossible,—and, granting the nature of that society's origin (that people with an enlarged ego shot off into space and drew a number of others with them) what was likely to happen? The thing that did happen: a monstrous degradation of Theosophy; Leadbeater and his drivelling psychism (and worse than psychism, as some of you know). They were not children, playing they were Kings and Queens; they were more like lunatics in an asylum, for they called one another by great and imposing names, such as Arhat (all of them were Arhats!); they reported familiar conversations with Gautama Buddha and with "The Master of Masters"; they turned themselves into Bishops and wore intoxicating clothes (the peacock's feathers of dementia); they slathered one another with compliments, guaranteeing one another's initiation into the highest levels of the Lodge. Annie Besant announced that some Hindu girl, one of her devotees, was "the World Mother"; "Bishop" Arundale promptly married her. The same Arundale, at present a strenuous candidate for their Presidency, wrote to Mrs. Besant from Australia that he spent all his nights in Nirvana. She wrote back (a letter that has been published), sympathizing with "Dearest George" because it must be "very tiring to spend the night in Nirvana and the day in Australia". That was in 1926. Can you imagine greater balderdash, or a more blasphemous travesty of Theosophy? It was not mere childishness or lunacy; there was intensely active evil back of it all. How could worse harm have been done to the Movement! But there is nothing extraordinary in this. Wherever the White Lodge forces its way, the Black Lodge is free to follow. To achieve great things in this world, great risks must be taken. The Theosophical Movement, coming down from above with tremendous momentum, plunged into the ocean of human life, and flung up on every side the mud and scum of human nature, particularly, perhaps, in those who were drawn to the Movement itself. This evil had to be thrown off if a nucleus were to survive; and thrown off it was, in repeated shocks and upheavals—disintegrating elements of ambition, selfishness, superstition, materialism, centring at Adyar, Point Loma and elsewhere. Mrs. Tingley's personal ambition and self-seeking became as notorious as the superstition of her followers; the same is true of the so-called United Lodge, though in different ways. As many of you are aware, Robert Crosbie was its inspiring genius. Some of us knew him well, years ago, in Boston. He was one of Judge's minor sorrows,—because Crosbie was psychic, always having "visions", always imagining that he was getting "messages", and so forth. Judge, of course, thoroughly understood him, and often grieved over him to us. Later, at a time when there was no excuse for it, as everyone had been warned, Crosbie followed Mrs. Tingley to Point Loma. When he finally discovered (much good his psychism did him!) that she was not what he had imagined her to be, he left Point Loma, and then, when he had obtained the financial backing he needed, set up as a "guru" on his own account, establishing the United Lodge as recruiting instrument.

Yet all of this sifting process, although it brought Theosophy into terrible disrepute with the unthinking public, was necessary and essentially wholesome, inasmuch as it purged the Movement of most undesirable elements; and it will

work out for ultimate good, so long as we recognize the facts, and never, in the future, allow ourselves to be deceived by efforts to draw us into so-called "co-operation".

All of these outside organizations have carried on public propaganda as if the Law of Cycles did not exist, that is to say, in spite of the turn of the tide, in spite of the indrawal of the spiritual forces which were poured out, through H.P.B. and Judge, during the last quarter of the century. If further evidence were needed, this alone would show how *deliberately* misguided they have been. It cannot be stated too often that the true Movement *must* indraw, away from the world, back toward the Lodge, as the spirit leadeth. It is our function, so far as possible, to draw the world after us,—the best that is in the world, in any case.

Now for another subject: there has been speculation on the part of some of you, I know, about the next Lodge Messenger, and about the possibility of a forerunner, as the Comte de Saint Germain seems to have acted as forerunner at the end of the eighteenth century. But do you realize that whoever comes, and whenever he comes, will come invisibly before he comes visibly? and that it is part of our function to-day to move in spirit toward him, until the point of junction is attained? One purpose of our assembling here to-day is that that inner contact may be hastened. Clearly that would be the wish of the Masters for us, as I am convinced it is their wish that those here to-day, in person or in aspiration, may feel their blessing, may feel their nearness, and may receive from all that is said and from all that is left unsaid, an overwhelming sense of the reality of the spiritual world.

What is our objective—I will not say as a Society, because it might be misunderstood (the purposes of the Society are published and are known); but what is our objective as individual members? What are we working for? Ultimately, for the restoration of the dynasty of Adept Kings. I do not think we should ever lose sight of that objective; we must not forget the ultimate because of our immersion in the immediate or proximate. Let us think back in history, then, just for a moment: nearly all of us have read of the efforts that were made to restore the Stuarts to the throne of England. Their place had been usurped by the Hanoverians. We know of the sacrifices that were made; that men and women devoted their entire lives—their money, everything that they valued—to the cause of the Stuarts. Yet they were working for something external in comparison with that for which we work. Realizing this, we can perhaps shame ourselves into greater and more one-pointed effort. Does everything that we do and say and read, centre around the ultimate restoration we entreat?

Then, as an intermediate step, we are working to carry the Movement forward until the next Lodge Messenger comes. Why will he come? He will come for the same ultimate purpose: to prepare the way of the Lord, he, a Great Preparer, but we in our turn, lesser preparers—every one of us; for every member of The Theosophical Society is, in a sense, following in the footsteps of John the Baptist, and should be performing a function similar to his.

Of course it is our right, if we choose to reject our opportunity, to say that we will have none of it, and yet remain members in good standing. I am, how-

ever, speaking to those who are glad of the chance to make their lives of real value. We can do this, in part, by perceiving that just as the gulf between the world and The Theosophical Society is an ever-widening gulf, so should be the gulf between ourselves and the world. The world, as such, is concentrated lower nature; and when we are obliged to make contact with the world, we ought to do it deliberately and with our eyes open, in complete control of what we are doing and of how we do it. If we are to feel here this morning, and again this afternoon—as I hope all of us will—the breath of the spirit in our hearts, we shall have felt, as we entered this room, that we were leaving the world behind us.

Some of you will remember that marvellous passage in one of the Buddhist books, in which the Buddha describes a meditation of "the Great King of Glory", who, after purifying himself, approached the door of the "inner chamber", and there stood, commanding, with "intense emotion", all evil thoughts, all desires of the personality, all its fears and all its worries, to remain without the threshold. "Stay here", "Thus far only", he ordered. Only then did he enter the inner chamber, the place of divine vision, there to behold "the heavenly Treasure of the Wheel". At the sight of it he made obeisance, exclaiming: "Roll onward, O my Lord, the Wheel! O my Lord, go forth and overcome!" It was another form, a Buddhist form, of "Thy will be done"; but the story reminds us also that if we would come into contact with reality, we must first separate ourselves from unreality; and we cannot do this until we begin to pierce through the rind of things toward the light that streams from within, until we have caught some glimpse of the glory of the Real, until something of its transcendent beauty has lifted our hearts and filled our souls with consuming desire. But now we can at least resolve to be held down no longer by the hideousness of worldly life; that we will no longer try to persuade ourselves that that hideousness is what we want. Because we know better; foolish as we are, blind as we are, we know better: *you* know better. Yes,—the truth of the matter is that with all your souls you love and long for the noblest, purest, most unselfish you can see. And it is because the Masters know that, that they stand here to-day and grant us their blessing.

The Convention then adjourned until 2.30 p. m.

Afternoon Session

The Chairman called for the report of the Committee on Nominations.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

MR. AUCHINCLOSS presented the following nominations: for the Executive Committee, to succeed themselves, Mr. Harris and Mr. Miller; for Treasurer, Mr. H. B. Mitchell; Assistant Treasurer, Mr. Kobbé; Secretary, Miss Perkins; Assistant Secretary, Miss Chickering. It was voted that the Secretary be instructed to cast one ballot for the election of officers as nominated, and that the Committee be discharged with thanks.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LETTERS OF GREETING

MR. J. F. B. MITCHELL read the numerous greetings to the Convention that

had been received from Branches and from members-at-large. The reading of these was punctuated with frequent applause. Extracts from these letters are printed at the end of this Report. Two members from Europe, who were heartily greeted, read their own reports.

THE CHAIRMAN, after the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting had been accepted with the thanks of the Convention, read a letter which had been received from one of the members-at-large, in which it was stated that Mr. Mitchell's article in the QUARTERLY, "Collegiate Education and Standards of Value", had been read aloud to the two upper forms, including over a hundred boys, by the Principal of one of America's largest and best-known private schools.

The report of the Committee on Resolutions was then called for.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

MR. HARGROVE: Before I submit the report of your Committee, perhaps I may be allowed to add to something that I said this morning. Speaking of the inevitable sifting-out process, and of the Adyar and similar societies, I failed to draw your attention to what seems to me to be an extremely significant fact. Take the best-known workers in The Theosophical Society,—Charles Johnston, for instance: Mr. Johnston was a poor man. He never, however, derived any financial benefit from his membership in the Society. A writer by profession, not only was he never paid for his articles in the QUARTERLY, but profits derived from the sale of his theosophical books, he turned back to the Quarterly Book Department as a gift. Some of you know that, in later years, he was one of the assistant editors of the *Encyclopædia Britannica;* that is to say, he earned his living from "secular" sources, and gave his spare time to work for the Society. Dr. Keightley, of course, was always a contributor, and never at any time drew the slightest financial benefit from his membership. Mr. Griscom was a most important contributor, of money and all else. You will remember that Saint Paul is said to have been a tent maker, supporting himself. That is the right principle.

It is wrong and thoroughly unwholesome, that anyone should make a living out of Theosophy. Yet, if you turn to the other societies, you will find that Mrs. Besant, for instance, was entirely dependent upon what she made out of her lectures and her books. There would always be a temptation, in that case, not only to work for a large membership, but to use the subject to advertize the lecturer and author. The larger the membership, the greater the demand for books; the greater the notoriety, the larger the sales. Mrs. Besant earned so much that she was able to support most of those who, under her, controlled the policy of her society. In the other societies also, the prominent workers are supported, directly or indirectly, in similar ways. They do not earn their living by secular work. I repeat that this is bad in principle. Work of that kind ought to be entirely voluntary. Even when the financial reward provides no more than a bare living (and Mrs. Tingley made a fortune out of it), the practice is demoralizing to the recipient, and proves that the organization which permits it is blind to spiritual factors and has been swallowed up by the world.

I want also to add something in regard to humility. I spoke of the fact that the people who are thrown off the revolving wheel of the Movement are those who feel themselves to be big, while those who feel like grains of sand have the best chance to adhere. This may have seemed to imply that all of us who are still members of the Society, are models of humility! Alas, no. I came to the conclusion, long ago, that it is only the Mahatma who can be completely humble; that all that the rest of us can do is to recognize our lack of humility. This is where the difference comes in. It is the people who think they are humble, who take themselves with portentous solemnity, and who cannot either laugh at themselves or hate themselves, who are lost. In either direction an element of safety lies. It is bad enough to be vain, but it is infinitely worse not to realize the silliness of it,—I will not say the "wickedness", because that is too big a term when it comes to ordinary vanity; but to see the silliness, and, if possible, the ridiculousness of it, should in time effect a cure. Nothing is more salutary than a sense of humour directed against ourselves. The type of humour that laughs at other people's adversities is despicable, but if humour be turned against self, it will do much to keep the exuberance of self in restraint. In brief, we may assume, because we are here to-day, not that we are humble, but that, first of all, we wish we were, and that when the opposite is discovered—as it ought easily to be—we try to treat it with contempt, or with the ridicule it deserves.

Now as to the Report of the Committee on Resolutions, I suggest the first thing we should keep in mind is that we live in a mechanical age, and that we ought to resolve not to allow ourselves to become its victims. The mechanizing tendency manifests in every conceivable way. It is a reversion to primitive forms of life. The ways of ants are mechanistic. Socialism, Hitlerism, Communism, NRA-ism, all make for the anthill type of life, and we, as members of The Theosophical Society, should make up our minds that whatever else happens, we will not "go insect". All present efforts to bring political and social life to a state of outer perfection by outer means, are mechanical both in method and aim. Education, business, and every other form of human activity would, at best, in such ways become stereotyped and stultifying. This does not mean that we should raise the flag of rebellion against the NRA, or anything of the kind. We cannot, at this stage of evolution, expect to control the surface of things; let the world have the surface, seeing that that is what it wants; and let us keep the inner power, as we can do if we grow in understanding; for right understanding, accompanied by right sacrifice, will give us the ability to choose and to aspire rightly, and our right choice and aspiration of to-day will draw the future—even the surface of the future—into the mould which Masters alone are wise enough to provide.

We must resolve to keep a level head in the midst of all that may be said and urged and threatened by modernistic zealots. We must strive for understanding. More harm is done in the world by well-meaning people who are stupid, than by people who are notoriously bad. We must strive for finer and finer kinds of understanding. We must recognize the tendencies of our racial and family heredity, and because all of us have been born in western as distinguished from

oriental bodies, we should expect a tendency to see things materialistically,—even to interpret Theosophy materialistically. We have, I am sure, been outgrowing that. As a Society we have made great progress within the last twenty-five years, away from materialistic expositions of Theosophy, to an understanding that is becoming more and more spiritual. There was a time, for instance, when the doctrine of Karma was interpreted mechanically by most members. I well remember W. B. Yeats, who at that time was interested in Theosophy, walking up and down the aisle at the Blavatsky Lodge in London, and rightly ridiculing Mrs. Besant's cut and dried interpretation. According to her, he said, if you were an efficient and virtuous boot-black in this life, you would reincarnate, as Karmic reward, in the guise of an efficient and virtuous grocer!

In those early days it was said by some members that Karma made prayer illogical. It did not seem to occur to them that even on a materialistic and mechanical basis, prayer is as natural an activity, and therefore as much an instrument of Karma, as the wind or the rain or any other agency. But we can go further than that. A few days ago I read a review of a book by Selma Lagerlof, the well-known Swedish writer, in which she tells a story of her childhood. Her father was very ill, and she, a small girl, made up her mind to enter into a compact with God. She undertook to read the Bible all the way through, if God would save her father's life. Her father's life was saved. It reminded me of a story of the youth of General Ludlow, whom you all know of as a highly valued member of this Society. When he was a little boy, his mother used to knit mittens for him to wear in cold weather, and he was always losing them, One winter day, he went out to skate with his brother, older by only a year or two. Before they started, his mother reminded him of all the trouble she had taken in knitting his mittens, and appealed to him not to lose them again. When the time came for the boys to return home, the little fellow suddenly remembered his mother's appeal,—and he was devoted to her. The mittens had gone! He and his brother hunted for them everywhere. The ground was covered with snow. The mittens were red, and would have been easy to see. There was no trace of them. The child was distressed beyond words: how could he face his mother after what she had said! So he went down on his knees, in the middle of the road, and prayed—his brother with him—that they might find those mittens—a heart-broken prayer. When they got up from their knees and looked around, there, a few feet away from them, right on the snow, were the mittens. No wonder that that child, when he became a grown man, used to say, "It is no use talking to me about prayer—I *know* that it works."

Now let me ask you: if you had known what was going on in the heart of that child—if you had seen his suffering—would you not have been sorry for him? Of course you would. Would you not have helped him if you could? And are Masters with their "legions" less compassionate than we are? No, the truth of the matter is that it is the privilege and joy of an entire choir of angels to answer the prayers of children and of the simple of soul. The "miracles" thus wrought are as much a part of greater Nature's beauty as the resurrection of life in the spring. It is part of the divine scheme of things, part of Karma itself that these

things are. So, more and more, we must get away from the mechanical, materialistic interpretation of Theosophy; we must gain the realization that there are margins of beauty around everything, worlds of mystery too sacred for the mind to penetrate, and that if we would really get at the truth, we must seek and pursue the spirit,—not the letter.

Then too, if we would carry out the suggestions made this morning, we must realize that it is our function to maintain in the world the traditions we have inherited—our birthright as members of this Society—*right* traditions: for instance, the right tradition of manners,—although I am afraid that very few of us, if any, can think of ourselves as exemplars. Even so, we do not need to have attained in order to recognize an ideal, and if we honestly value these things, and strive to act and live accordingly, we shall be keeping alive the tradition. We owe it to the Movement to try to preserve everything that we see as best in civilization. The rudeness and roughness which now seem to be the vogue, are evidence of moral degeneracy, and it is for us, because of our membership, and no matter how we may fail in performance, to strive ceaselessly to express all that we can of kindliness, of consideration, of courtesy, recognizing the inestimable value of these in terms of the spiritual life.

We must maintain the old ideals. There is, for instance, the subject of marriage—and you know what the world thinks about it to-day, or, no matter what it *thinks* about it, what it *does*. It is for us to uphold the highest, purest ideals of marriage, and we should be untrue to Theosophy, untrue to Masters, if we were to fail in this—if we were to fail in setting ourselves immovably against cheapness of divorce, as against all other laxities in matters of sex.

We must uphold theosophical principles in every direction. Consider the hierarchical principle—one of the basic truths of Theosophy—in connection with family life: we must respect it and act upon it. You know as well as I do, that in far too many families to-day it is regarded as more or less the function of children to bring up their parents. When children become a public nuisance, parents say, apologetically: "What can we do? We should lose them if we pushed them too hard". In some cases, when one knows the children, one is tempted to reply: "*Lose* them! No such luck for you, my friends". One does not say it, because it would not be understood. Nevertheless the attitude of such parents is cowardly; they shirk their responsibility and prove they are not fit to be parents. Children who regard their parents solely as a source of revenue; who are devoid of filial respect; who have no sense of the life-long duty they owe their parents, are a danger to the community no matter to what class of society they belong, and no matter what their age. There is no solution except to adhere to right principle from the beginning—to correct children when they need it, to praise them when they deserve it—with love, but without fear. If, as a result, they choose to go, let them go. You cannot in any case deprive them of their power of choice, and if they choose evil, you will not improve matters by doing likewise. Parents who are true to their ideals, who are true to truth and to Theosophy, cannot fail in the end, for it is only by such sacrifice that the wilful and selfish and depraved can ultimately be saved. The world tries to com-

promise, but compromise accomplishes nothing,—and it is not for us to be drawn into the current of the world's worst failures.

Speaking this morning of indrawal, I said that the gulf between the world and The Theosophical Society is steadily increasing, and must of necessity increase. Have you thought of what happened after the death of the Master Christ? His apostles retired into an upper room, away from the world, and there prayed and meditated,—the women with them. In the Acts of the Apostles it is said that there were a hundred and twenty of them in all; not a large body of people, but dynamic, because they were united in faith and purpose,—lifting up their hearts, waiting, expecting, believing. They were obeying the law of the spirit at the point between two cycles; and as we, in obedience to the same law, indraw more and more,—the life of the Society will tend to correspond more closely with that meeting of the hundred and twenty in the upper room, apart from the world. There will be practically no propaganda; the activity will be inner rather than outer,—with the duty mutually to keep alive the fire of real desire, of true aspiration, as we wait, watch and prepare for the coming of the Messenger. Therefore, let us forget numbers, let us separate ourselves from the obsession of quantity. A hundred and twenty people to start a world-wide religion: more than enough! And in our case, a dozen would be enough. But what a great and marvellous function it is that this Society will have to perform,—having the vision, so to live, so to aspire, so to will, as to draw down from heaven the supreme gift that the world unknowingly awaits.

Let us make ready for that; let us learn how to give the whole of ourselves to one spiritual desire, and thus become able to wield the power that will have been placed in our hands. Once we achieve that, the Society will no longer be as a voice crying in the wilderness, but, instead, a lightning rod, a conductor, drawing into every yearning heart the celestial fire which alone can redeem the world, which alone can lift humanity from the hell it has created, to the new heaven and new earth we were promised from the beginning.

Dr. Torrey (supplementing, by request, the report of the Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions): There is a subject which cannot have been far from our thoughts to-day as we have dwelt upon the unsettled condition of the world, and that is the subject of imminent war in Europe. The world faces the possibility with confusion and bewilderment, but the same should not be true of our membership, because, ever since 1918, we have been told repeatedly that "the war is not yet over"; that we should "take long views of the war", and that we should remember that "Germany was not beaten though she could have been".

The press is full of rumours and predictions. Simonds, writing in the April *Atlantic* under the title: "Austria the Powder Barrel of Europe", assures us of Hitler's deliberately announced intention to assert the German hegemony over the block of Central European States which, in times past, have been under German sovereignty. The recent move against the Dolfuss Government is the first step, to be followed later by aggression against Czechoslovakia, Hungary and

Bulgaria. This is no fantastic dream. On the contrary it would re-establish a territorial association which, in the form of the Holy Roman Empire, existed for the thousand years between Charlemagne and Napoleon. Hitler has made himself a symbol of the desire for unity which, at bottom, is common to 75,000,000 Germans dwelling in the very heart of Europe.

Now history shows us that a programme of aggrandizement at the expense of neighbour states has invariably landed Europe in armed conflict. Simonds sees but three solutions for the problem:

1. A concerted action of the European Powers to guarantee Austrian independence.

2. A war for balance of power eventually.

3. A war of prevention instigated by France within the year.

There is small likelihood that the first possibility can be realized. Wordy conferences accomplish nothing, and the move would have to be backed by a plain display of force. The European Powers are vacillating, jealous of one another, and beset with internal troubles. To try to "muddle through" and to delay the issue is to create a situation fraught with ever-increasing danger. Finally there is the possibility of a war of prevention on the part of France who was never in a better position for it than to-day. She has the military machinery, the statesmen, the willing allies. Let her delay, and her military equipment becomes progressively outmoded and lessened in efficiency as compared with that of her powerful enemy. "War within the year"! Sinister and terrible words of a hard-headed journalist. Yet the world, outside the narrow circle of doctrinaire pacifists, recognizes the irresistible logic of the position.

Some of us were very young when the last outbreak occurred; some of us were not so young in years, but we were young in Theosophy. The voice of our leaders was hardly more than one voice among other voices. And those other voices—the Chief Executive of the Nation, clergy, liberal educators—confused and bewildered us just as they bewilder young men and women to-day. Theosophy alone can clear up the confusion. I do not mean, of course, that outside our membership there is no understanding of the situation. I mean, rather, that the Theosophic truth at the heart of Christianity, Buddhism, or even of true science, is alone capable of dispelling the clouds of misconception gathered about the educated modern mind.

For what is the root of the confusion? Here is Germany exhibiting certain most admirable features: tenacity of purpose, one-pointedness, co-operative patriotism, certain kinds of moral cleansing, austere living and a searching and sacrificial attempt to bring her peculiar genius to flower. Is not this the very path along which our own thinkers would gladly move our Nation? Is not a high æstheticism and a passion for perfection behind this movement? The German is faced with a European garden-spot which is an offence to his æsthetic ideal. Waste and confusion prevail in place of the scientific order and discipline which he loves; ugly foreign weeds threaten to stifle the native Teutonic plants.

Barring slight differences, this is likewise the ideal of the liberal naturalistic school of thought in all nations. Science and controlled economics; the culti-

vation of sense-pleasures as making for the ultimate good—in a word, materialism triumphant in congress and in college. Shall American scholars rail at Germans for advancing farther along the road toward our common ideal? It ill fits the pot to call the kettle black.

In that homely proverb we strike our first note of reality. Black! Their light is darkness—the darkness which rests upon the agnostic, prideful race of university-trained men who are given to a passionate belief in *Maya*, and who seek through psychism for life and more abundant life.

Germany has long been the source and focus of this evil doctrine. Its doctorate degree granted to the scientific researcher is the model upon which the American graduate school is founded. Attentive travellers in the country as far back as Bismarck's day, bear witness to a ferocious egoism, a strange and sinister and mighty power which shakes the Teutonic soul to its centre, and makes of the German warrior something of terror which has not been in the modern world before. What is the lesson for us who are gathered here?

Kipling has written a short story called "The Mother Hive". A wax moth slips into the hive and proceeds to cajole the working sisters with soft words, while she spreads her principles (eggs) through the comb, and promises the coming of a New Era and a Great Change when bees will subsist on the "hival honey" and will work only six minutes each day. Comb will be built with circular cells to save wax; guards will be withdrawn from the door, and an era of song and dance among "the merry, merry blossoms" will prevail. The working sisters are encouraged to lay eggs like queens, and to spread the new principles. Soon the change is in full swing. A swarm of monstrous and malformed bees hatches from the workers' eggs, and the hive becomes foul with wax-moth larvae and their noisome tunnels. But two wise bees, Melissa and Saccharina, have come to understanding, and they build a royal queen cell after the ancient pattern. The old queen lays an egg there and dies exhausted. In secret the princess is raised on the royal food.

Upon a fateful day the beekeeper and his son come to inspect the hives. Then occurs the Great Burning and the Sulphur Smoke. But calling the swarming-cry, and accompanied by a slender cupful of clean bees, the new Queen escapes to the old oak, where, clinging fast, the bees witness the Destruction by Fire foretold of old time. In the gloom, a wax moth flits away to the wood crying: "A slight miscalculation in the plans, my dears, but see what a marvellous change we brought about."

There stands our ideal: a handful of clean bees rallied about an ancient, royal heritage, waiting through the night of the Great Burning and Cleansing—waiting to carry on once more according to the Immemorial Law of the Hive.

Mr. González Jiménez (who spoke both as a member of the Committee on Resolutions and on behalf of the Venezuela Branch): It would take a long time to recount the activities of the Venezuela Branch during the year. I shall limit myself to summarizing them, but I know that I shall fail to communicate to my words the fire that lived there. This has been a year full of intensity in the life

of our Branch, a year of precise definitions, of clear conceptions, of a definite goal.

It is of special significance to us because the Venezuela Branch, in its present form, was founded on a 24th of June, the summer solstice, twenty-five years ago, although Theosophy in Venezuela dates back as far as 1881, since the first coming of Mr. Judge, whose love for the Cause left the lamp lighted in the world of the Real. And we understand that the fire burning there to-day was kindled by what that great Preparer did.

If by the light of the three objects of the T. S. we were to seek for an interpretation of our work, we could epitomize it thus: first, the members of the Venezuela Branch love each other more, and have realized that this nucleus of love, without distinction of personalities, has to be spread wide and enclose within its folds the whole of humanity; second, besides the studies in the Branch meetings proper, and in the gatherings of students, each member has selected a line of investigation, either scientific, religious or philosophical, in which to specialize, so as to contribute this particular aspect to the general fund of knowledge which it is the purpose of the second object to establish; third, an effort has been made to understand how the whole programme of life culminates in the transmutation of the so-called personality into the self-conscious spiritual individuality, whose archetype is to be found in the Master on whose ray we are: the task of the spirit in matter, the dispelling of the Maya created for the attainment of self-consciousness, to come back to the awakened unity through the dream of diversity.

At this point we may say that some members of the Branch have attended to the final invitation made by the Society at the Convention at Boston in 1895: "And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this." The work has been, therefore, one of discrimination between the Real and the unreal; the gaining of knowledge through a universal, comparative study, and the readiness to serve.

As an emblem of what we members are destined to become, the Venezuela Branch wishes that symbol you are looking at on the wall [a beautifully carved shield with antique sword, presented by the Venezuela Branch] to remain in the hall of this Branch that entertains our Conventions, as a mirror and a pattern: the sword of Will illuminated by the radiant sun of Buddhi lighting up the endeavour of our Movement: to kill the dragon of the personality which it tramples to earth and, at the centre, the crown of glory promised to the victor, the crown of the Master King. That sword belonged to the cavalry of Charles III, the wise, the gallant king who drove out of Spain in a single night—luminous night!—the Black Society; and the wood of the shield is from a tree that grew in the yard of our Branch and was itself watered by Juan José Benzo. Please accept it as the symbol of the Victory awaiting us.

Let me end by expressing to our dear Ancients, on behalf of all my fellow-workers of the Venezuela Branch, our thankfulness for having built the bridge across the abyss that separates earth from heaven. Our thanks, too, to that collective consciousness that affectionately we call the QUARTERLY.

We could summarize the work of this year with the triad of William Q. Judge: Unity, Study, Work.

Comrades! the voice of the Lodge loudly resounds: Let us cross the Bridge. *La Patrie d'en haut nous appelle.*

The Chairman, after the report of the Committee on Resolutions had been accepted with thanks, invited the delegates and visiting members to address the Convention. Referring to the fact that the Venezuela Branch was represented by ten of its members, who had come all the way from Caracas, he called first upon Mr. Rafael Carías, President of the Branch, who spoke in Spanish, and whose remarks were then translated into English by Mr. Bermudez, another of the Branch delegates.

Mr. Carías: *Mr. Chairman:* Our Venezuela Branch has wished to re-affirm unanimously its deep love and loyalty to the Ideal as promulgated by the Founders of The Theosophical Society, and attends this Convention, not represented by delegates, but by the Branch itself, for here are all its officers. Besides, each of our companions who remain in Venezuela is also represented individually by one of us, and this I think to be a unique thing in the life of the Society. We take it as rather miraculous that as many as ten members have been able to make this trip, when, for most of them, it seemed something quite impossible to effect. We all know that every good and perfect gift comes from above, and the fact of our being here at this Convention we interpret as a great gift, and an opportunity that will demand the proof of our love for Masters, and the will and decision to give ourselves to Them with the surrender of our whole hearts.

The Chairman then called upon two members from Europe to address the Convention, both of whom brought greetings, one from a Branch, the other on behalf of fellow-members. Next, the other Venezuelan representatives were invited to speak, doing so either in English, French or Spanish.

Miss Cotton: The Venezuela Branch believes that the greatest honour she can ever attain will be to have a place in the work of the Lodge, and she is resolved to accept joyfully, no matter at what cost, the responsibility of belonging to the Masters' Cause.

Madame Sánchez: Here we are; it is the cry of our hearts,—with these hearts free of themselves, so that the Masters may work through us and make in us Their dwelling.

Here we are to do Their will.

Miss Reyes: First, our gratitude to those, visible and invisible, who helped us to come here. . . . A Convention of The Theosophical Society is something our minds may never conceive, but our hearts must feel. The blessing of this hour is something that never can be longed for too much, and there is not a price in self-conquest too high to pay for it.

This year, the work of the Venezuela Branch has been one of discernment. It has been the cry of the Prodigal Son: "I will arise and go to my Father". We

must remember our divine origin; we are from heaven and we must return there. This has been the work of the Venezuela Branch this year, an intense one, the effort to get a true vision of our duty as members of The Theosophical Society, through unity of purpose and meditation, trying above all things to gain devoted love for the Master on whose Ray we are. I believe that the best prayer of all here present, is to ask the help of the blessed Masters, so that we can go out from this Convention with the determination in our hearts, as the last "Fragments" say: "To shake off the dust of earth, and to consolidate the dust of heaven." Thus we shall be able, as far as we can, to carry out their highest purposes.

Our gratitude for all the help given to us through the New York Branch, that has been a light in our dark days.

MR. GARCIA: In the first place I wish to give thanks to the Masters for having granted us the blessing of attending this Convention, and to you for the honour you confer in inviting us to speak. I have only a few words to say.

There is a feeling among my fellow-members that this will be a decisive Convention, in the sense that it will be a very definite opportunity to make a new beginning. As I think of the fact that the only branch of the T. S. existing in the whole of Latin America is the Venezuela Branch, as I think of its continued existence for more than forty years, I believe that our Branch has a mission to fulfil: to preserve the spirit of the Movement there.

MR. RIVERO: *Mr. Chairman,* It is of thankful significance to me to have the honour and the privilege of being again with you.

A few days ago I went to Caracas by the quickest way. Fast as it was, the journey seemed to me very slow, because, full of anxiety, I went to see my mother, who was dying, and received her last blessing.

There, in my country, as here before leaving, I found, as always, the affection of my family and the sympathy of my friends,—especially that of my fellow-members of the Venezuela Branch. Now, with them and you all in Convention assembled, I have the fortune to be still in the bosom of another mother: The Theosophical Society.

Notwithstanding that silence is the most eloquent expression in this inspiring moment, let me voice, with humility and reverence, the feelings of my heart in one single word: gratitude.

MR. ALVAREZ PEREZ: As my English is very limited and all my fellow-members have already expressed what I would have said, it is little I have to say.

I was recently told that some years ago the Lodge was asking for recruits; after that it asked for soldiers. In our Branch more than one member is trying to become a soldier of the Lodge.

MR. URBANEJA: It is a privilege to be among you after the many years since I have lived in New York. At present I feel myself filled with a new spirit, that of the true soldier; for if the Lodge is to have them, we must model ourselves to

its requirements. Let us remember the expression of the ancient Greek mother, who said to her sons when going into battle: Return with the shield or upon it.

MR. BERMUDEZ: Out of an infinite compassion we have been called to participate in this feast of feasts. You remember the verse:

What does it take to make a rose,
Mother-mine?
The God who died to make it knows
It takes the world's eternal wars,
It takes the moon and all the stars,
It takes the might of Heaven and Hell,
And the Everlasting Love as well,
Little child.

Like him, the little child, we, the members of the Venezuela Branch ask ourselves what did it take to bring us to this Convention, and we feel that no less a miracle of Love and Patience has been accomplished. The Everlasting Love! Wrapped in His flaming arms, we have been snatched from the world, as it were, and carried here to get the vision of our destiny, of our glory. How to show our gratitude for this tremendous privilege? There is only one way. To give back our love to Them who filled us with love, by surrendering our hearts.

Reports from other delegates were then called for.

DR. HOHNSTEDT, for the members of the Cincinnati Branch, expressed appreciation and thanks for the QUARTERLY; gave a brief account of the work of the Branch during the past year, and concluded with the hope that more of their members might be able to attend the Convention in 1935, as all of them would wish to do.

MRS. REGAN, for the Providence Branch, said that the questions contained in the notification of Convention by the Secretary T. S., had proved extremely helpful, especially the question in regard to the ideal of the Branch. This had been discussed, the result being a unanimous desire that the Branch should become a centre through which the Lodge might work, with the inference that each member must strive to become that which would make this possible.

MRS. ROSE, also speaking for the Providence Branch, brought greetings and gratitude for the Convention.

MR. GARDINER H. MILLER: So many of you are familiar with the proceedings of the New York Branch meetings, that I do not think I need do more than recall to your minds some of the things discussed during the season. I should like to do that, because to me the keynote of Convention is linked very closely with what has been the theme of our discussion in the New York Branch this winter. We began with a reference to a book, *La Réponse du Seigneur*, in which much is said of the power of contemplation in the attainment of an ideal. Professor Mitchell, this morning, spoke of denial as often a gift of the thing denied, which reminded me of something said in that book about prayer—that prayer is not to receive, but to become; and in the process of becoming (it was stated in that book, and it

has been the keynote of our season's discussions, as it has been the keynote to-day) we must surrender self. Personality must be surrendered before individuality can be attained.

As to indrawal: that seems to me to consist in dropping the personality overboard,—forgetting about it. You will recall the Albrecht Dürer picture of the Knight surrounded by hideous monsters of sin and death, but utterly oblivious of them. The horrors in the world to-day are so marked that, to accomplish even the slightest degree of indrawal, we must get clear of the personality, as it affects our inner aspiration and inner efforts. That does not mean that we are not to resist the world, for we must fight with all the power, all the will and energy that we have, to resist it; but we must not worry or fret about it. We must practise Detachment. That will make possible our indrawal into the spiritual world.

Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell: *Mr. Chairman and Fellow Members*, in looking forward to the Convention and asking myself what it was that the Lodge would like to have come forth from it, it seemed to me that what is asked of us is vision, and loyalty to that vision,—because if you lack loyalty to the vision, the vision itself is soon lost. That is what is asked of us, and that, as I see it, is the need of the world. It follows that when we fight for these things in ourselves, fight to hold our vision, to be loyal to it in action, in thought, in feeling, we are fighting the battle of the world. There is no difference. That battle can be fought out by each one of us in his own mind and heart. Victory there, giving life to the ideal by living it, will help to bring into the world that which the world so sorely needs. The need of the world is vision of an ideal to love and to follow.

The desire and effort of the Lodge for man to-day must be to draw forth the latent heroism in the souls of men, that the soul may unfold its potentialities, of nobility, of heroism, of splendour. The soul cannot be aroused if it sees no ideal worthy of its devotion. We have been given the knowledge that the highest ideal of our own hearts is true, that there is that which is wholly lovable, and that we may know and love it. There are three things in life that are worth while: To know that there is that which is wholly lovable and to love it with utter self-forgetfulness; to know that we, and the world, are loved and cared for with infinite compassion by those above us; to know that we can gain the power to help. Theosophy has brought us the knowledge that those things are true, and that it is possible to give ourselves in utter, complete self-giving to the ideal of our hearts. It seems easy to do that at a moment like this, but there are many times when, though we know that that is what we long with all our hearts to do, we cannot do it.

At this point there is a step that we can always take. I suggest the analogy of a ship in a storm, leaking, stranded on a rock with waves breaking over it, sure to break up; and the captain, with hundreds of lives entrusted to his care, desperately trying to get a line to the shore. He could not throw a line heavy enough to bear the weight of a man, but he could throw a light line, and when that had been caught and held, it could be used to draw heavier ones, over which the passengers could be carried to safety. What we need, to keep ourselves from

being overwhelmed and drowned by psychic waves, is to get a line to the firm shore of the spiritual world, over which we can pass to safety. We may not be able to throw the line of our love, and nothing weaker can be counted upon to bear us, but we can always throw the light line of our attention. We can always turn our attention to the things of the spirit and hold it there. And when the line of attention has been thrown, caught and fixed there, then desire and interest can be drawn along that line; and after desire and interest will go the love that we long to give. When that love has been given, it will carry our souls to their salvation, and it will do far more. It will enable us to bring salvation to the world, because with that love it will be possible to live the ideal as it ought to be lived, to make it live in the world so that men can see it, can know that it is true, can know that there is the good, the true, the noble, the wholly lovable. Then, by contrast, they might see what the world so needs to see to-day: the existence of active, malignant evil. I had almost said that the world needs to believe in evil as much as it needs to believe in good. So much of its trouble to-day is due to the fact that it has lost its belief in the danger and malignancy of evil. So it plays with it, shuts its eyes to its existence, and, instead of fighting it to the death, talks of pacifism and disarmament. In spite of the lessons of the War, the world refuses to recognize that there are men and nations, dominated by evil of the worst type, which seek to kill—and which, unless fought and conquered, will kill—all that is good in life, all that is beautiful, all that is compassionate and tender, all that is manly and noble. So, instead of having a clear-cut fight between those on one side who see good and love it, and who know and hate wickedness, and, on the other side, those who deliberately choose to throw in their lot with that wickedness, we have everything mixed and colourless. We have the tragedy of those who wish to do good but are caught by their own stupidity, caught by the use which the powers of evil make of their vague, unintelligent desires, turning them to Pacifism, Socialism, and the whole brood that we have to-day.

Year after year, I am impressed by the power that right thinking by members of the Theosophical Movement has, to affect the thought of the world. The Theosophical Movement has been compared to a spear-point of light, conquering the darkness of the world in order that (as Mr. Hargrove said this morning) the Adept Kings may come back from exile and rule once more on earth. Before that can happen, the world must ardently desire it, and before it can desire it, it must see it as the ideal; and false ideals and other obstacles must be cleared out of the way. When Madame Blavatsky started her work, two of the greatest obstacles were the dogmatism of science and the dogmatism of religion. Both of these have been greatly weakened. Before the world could desire Adept Kings, the notion that the ideal was democracy had to be removed. You will remember how, for years, in meeting after meeting of The Theosophical Society, that false ideal was attacked. It has not been weakened to the same extent as dogmatism, but its throne is rocking.

The ideals that the world needs for its salvation have been brought into it by our leaders. They are here. In the simile of an earlier Convention, our leaders

have scaled the wall of the beleaguered city in which the heart of the world is held captive. They have planted our banner on that wall and call to us to come up to them. It is for us to go forward, to win the day, or die of shame.

Dr. Clark: I should like to continue what has been spoken of by so many: the contrast between the world and the Theosophical Movement. In one of the books of the spring, Dr. Breasted's *Dawn of Conscience*, he tries to meet one of the situations now present in the world—the loss of all respect for morals and ethics, especially on the part of the young, which he explains as due to the fact that, in the past, the standards and obligations of morals have been taught as descending to man from heaven, and as man has lost all belief in heaven he has lost respect for what was supposed to descend from there. Dr. Breasted brings forward, to replace that standard, the discarding of which is responsible for so much evil in the world to-day, another standard of ethics and morals which he says was put together by men in Egypt, many hundreds of years before the alleged heaven-sent standards were given to man. Let us accept his statement, though if we were to investigate the source of that Egyptian standard, we might be led to believe that it too was sent from heaven. He thinks that in the present state of the world men will respect anything they themselves create. His contention may be right,—that some may be won to this earth-made standard and good accomplished. Nevertheless, the course of history, throughout all the cycles of civilization, shows that nations develop and grow only when men act in obedience to that which they believe is given them from heaven; and, on the other hand, that nations disintegrate and civilizations dissolve, when they are governed by ideals that have their origin in man and his wisdom.

It is our good fortune to be members of The Theosophical Society. We know that it was brought to us from the Lodge, by Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge and others. Therefore, as has been said so many times, it is the great hope of the world in this period of disintegration. It is our good fortune, a thing for which we can never be sufficiently grateful, that, in defending and maintaining its standards, we contribute to the salvation and hope of the entire world.

Mr. LaDow: This morning, Professor Mitchell referred to real life as a drama, suggesting that when life is truly lived, it assumes a dramatic form. I believe that we can derive both help and consolation from this, because in a drama, in a great tragedy for example, each small incident is transfigured by the *dénouement*, by the course of the drama as a whole. Not only the petty and trivial, but even evil and vice may be thus transformed. If we can only think of the details and nuisances of our personal lives as being potentially parts of a great drama, if we will to make them so, we shall be able more easily to discover the lessons which they are intended to teach us.

Dr. Torrey said that "muddling through" is a common practice in Europe. I venture to add that it is a common practice in America also. It is certain that we shall never "muddle through" to any theosophical goal. The notion that we shall inevitably reach that goal, whatever we may do or not do, is an expression of the mechanical view of life, against which Mr. Hargrove warned us. Karl

Marx must be held primarily responsible for the wide dissemination of the theory that the human race could not help evolving in a fixed direction. The socialist state that he prophesied was, therefore, certain to come. Fortunately few of us regard Marx as a prophet; but we should be careful not to be influenced by mechanistic theories of any kind. We must cultivate the spirit of self-reliance, in its true sense.

We must prove our readiness to give ourselves wholly to the work of the Movement. We must be eager to offer the whole of ourselves, in exchange for the privilege of sharing the work of the Masters.

Mr. Auchincloss: Many of us, I imagine, as is always the case at Convention, are experiencing the feeling of being lifted up into a rarified atmosphere; of functioning upon a higher level than we usually do,—on a level where feeling is quickened, where our inner perceptions are more acute, where time ceases to exist. The inner significance of many things unfolds rapidly before us. Past, present and future are blended, as a consecutive whole. It seems easy, in the current of Lodge Force which moves us forward here, to function upon this higher level habitually, and we see no reason why we cannot. But when we leave this atmosphere, we relapse too often to our old level. We say to ourselves, —"Ah, no; I cannot do it. I am too dead, too frozen inside. Those long years when vanity, self-love, self-will, self-reference controlled me, have congealed things in me. I have a long way to go before I can hold, in daily life and living, the level of Convention. I must conquer these things, I must thaw out, *first*."

When we say this kind of thing to ourselves, we are *wrong*. We are not working with the current of Lodge Force. We are opposing it. Did you ever see the ice come out of a river, when the thaw comes? First the snow begins to go. Then the sun becomes warmer, and there are signs of spring. But still the ice holds unbroken. There is more and more warmth and life in the air. A great change in nature is apparent. But still the ice holds unbroken, holds for an unbelievably long time, until one thinks that it is *never* going to disappear. Until, suddenly, one day, there is a great crack, and then another, and another. All at once, the ice begins to move, to disintegrate, to go out.

The sun, the warmth of the atmosphere, have done their part. But, alone, they could not have done it. For it was the current in the river, working underneath to undermine that icy covering, that finally proved irresistible, and swept it all away. So it is with us. It is contact with our teachers in the Movement, with our fellows, that gives us life and warmth, softens us, makes us *want* to have that dreadful iciness within us go. But it is the current of Lodge Force itself, working through them, working within us, that thaws us out, breaks up and carries away those icy moulds of ours,—if we do not oppose it by thinking that *we* must *first* overcome the old faults and weaknesses and sins, *before* we can go forward with that great current. The current will take care of all those things, if we will only go with it. We shall be lifted up and swept along, the old moulds will go, and we shall recapture the atmosphere of Convention, and hold it, and live in it continuously more and more.

MR. SAXE: At a New York Branch meeting, quite a long while ago, one of the older members was speaking about the point of view and the objective of the present-day members, as compared with those of the old days. It was pointed out that whereas now-a-days we speak of the possibility of discipleship and have that as our objective, in the earlier days, everybody expected to be a chêla, and still earlier, everybody expected to become an adept. It was said that that is perhaps the best view; people rarely accomplish the ideal at which they aim, so it is well to aim very high. If a man makes up his mind to make a million dollars, he may make five hundred thousand; or if he decides to make five millions, he may make one! Convention is the time when we should think of renewing our ideals and raising them as high as we possibly can.

Some of us now living in New York used to be members-at-large, and came here for more than one Convention; and we know, by experience, how it seems to such visitors. They have the feeling that if they could be here, right at headquarters, in contact with the older members, they would accomplish wonders. Perhaps they do not think they would become adepts exactly, but they have an idea that there is no knowing what they might become. The worst of it is they are probably right. Most of us had that idea. We did not say: I will be an adept; but we were very hopeful. Then we finally came, and had all these wonderful lessons and opportunities. If we could have a strictly confidential talk, we could give you a very satisfactory explanation of why we are not so altitudinous, but when we have to speak before those who have been looking after us all these years, we have to tell the truth. The reason we are not further along is that we have not had enough self-sacrifice, enough devotion, enough love. If we had enough of these, all the rest would be accomplished.

We speak about sacrifice from many different angles. It has been pointed out that we should not think of ourselves as making sacrifices,—in one sense we cannot sacrifice. But from the point of view of the personality we do have to sacrifice, and the measure of our progress is largely the measure of the sacrifice that we are willing to make. One aspect which, while quite familiar to us, we are apt to forget, is that each time we sacrifice the lower, each time we conquer ourselves at some point—especially if we do it thoroughly and whole-heartedly—even though the lower self may object very strenuously, we thereby obtain a little more vision, a little more light, and a little more joy. When the dark time comes and we find it difficult to do anything but rest on our oars, it may be helpful to remember this.

MR. KOBBÉ: I wonder if we all realize the privilege it is for us to be here to-day. I do not mean just those of us who are here in person, but all fellow students of Theosophy who are here in spirit. Much was said this morning about what is going on in the world around us, about the psychic current that is coursing through the world and seeping into practically every corner of it. Without Theosophy, I wonder where we should be. Many a supposedly clear-thinking person, many a person who is trying to live honestly and intelligently, is being

carried, willy nilly, with that current. Yet it is our privilege to be able to stand on the bank, as it were, and watch the current flow past us.

In the world, standards are being lowered, quality is being disregarded. There is no principle, apparently, in anything that is being done. Yet we are here, where there is principle, where standards are maintained, where there is a decided regard for quality. Do we realize the tremendous privilege this is? Let us consider what we may do about this privilege. In detail, of course, each one will do something quite different from what is done by everyone else; but in general, what can we all unite in doing? Each time I have thought of that, the word gratitude has come into my mind and heart. We can take each daily duty, no matter what it may be, no matter how it may differ from that of another, and put back of it and around it, gratitude; try to make it a "quality product". Thus we can contribute the best that we know; we can try to make a thing of quality out of whatever we have to do, and give that to the Lodge.

MR. BRUSH: *Mr. Chairman*, We have often been reminded here that insight gives added responsibility. Those of us who have been privileged to attend the meetings of the New York Branch this winter, and to some extent those who receive and read the reports of these meetings, have a special responsibility. The subject, we know, has centred round the contemplation of the ideal, and its manifestation in the outer world through positive, conscious action. We have been given a glimpse into those hidden powers of consciousness that govern our lives. Our responsibility, it seems to me, consists in this: how far are we going to be able to transform this priceless information into living knowledge, into insight that we can use in the service of the Movement? We all know it can only be done by action, purposeful action, on all planes of our being,—hour by hour, day by day, and moment by moment. Are we going to allow ourselves, younger fellow-members, to waste even the smallest part of this infinitely precious gift, our heritage from those who have gone before, in idle dreaming or in merely spasmodic outbursts of effort? If we do, we do so, as we know, at our own peril and the peril of the Movement that we are all of us trying to serve. Even a little insight into the issues that wait upon the least of our honest efforts in the service of the Movement, in spite of our defects and disabilities, should fan our enthusiasm into a living flame, a white heat—and what is more, keep it there.

MR. RUSS: Of course with my deafness I could not hear anything that was said, but that does not make any difference. I believe you just the same. After you have been coming to these Conventions as often as I have, you might get that way yourself. There are many of us here who have been coming very often. Is that not a fine thing, that I can say "very often",—because it has reference to the vitality and the age of the Society. It reminds us of what Madame Blavatsky said: that The Theosophical Society is doomed to exist—which does not mean that it will go on whether we do anything or not. Why are we here to-day, and who brought us here? We know that we joined the Society because we saw something that attracted us. In one way or another, peculiar to each person,

we became conscious of the light of the Lodge and the existence of Masters; and that light attracted us. We accepted it; we opened our minds and our hearts to it that that light might shine in.

Just as soon as we have done that, we cease to drift aimlessly hither and thither, and we revolve more or less around this inner light and this centre. We may actually try to draw near to it; yet while we may keep in mind that inner light, nevertheless our attention and interest is still in the world, towards the world. We know that better than anything else. We are held by it, and so in a sense we walk backwards. We stumble and fall, then get up and do it again. Then we come to Convention, and as soon as we get here amongst each other, we realize that we are away from the world; that we may leave the world alone a little while and let it get along without us. Hardly realizing it, we look over our shoulders and see a little more of that light, or hear something of that sound which makes no noise. Is it not natural that we should go away from here, wishing to carry some of that feeling with us? And we do. But we have an apprehension that we shall go back to those old conditions of dryness and discouragement, which we cannot understand, and which we think are disharmony within us, when that is not necessarily the case—it may be more like antithesis and contrast.

When you cannot get out of a bad situation, the next best thing you can do is to try to understand it and visualize it. If you will do that correctly, you can put yourself in such a condition that, no matter what the circumstances may be, they cannot harm you or reach you. Through efforts toward detachment, you will begin to get some sense of that poised silence within you, and that will help you to realize that the light of the Lodge may be shining on you, and you may actually see a little of it or feel it. Then you can think again of the Convention and of how grateful we are to the Masters for having brought us here.

The Convention also had the pleasure of hearing from Mr. Ganson, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Kobbé Jr., Mr. Russ Jr., Mr. Miller Jr., Mr. Mitchell Jr., and Mrs. Field.

The thanks of the Convention having been voted to its officers, to the editors of the QUARTERLY, and to the New York Branch for its hospitality, the Convention adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary of Convention.
JULIA CHICKERING,
Assistant Secretary of Convention.

LETTERS OF GREETING

AYLSHAM, ENGLAND.

Mrs. Graves wrote: In the Norfolk Branch there are encouraging signs of increased earnestness of purpose and understanding. In these respects, the past year has been encouraging. . . . We make a definite effort to become conscious of our unity, not only as a separate Branch composed of individual members, but as a whole with all other Branches scattered throughout

the world, and especially with the New York Branch, to which we owe so much for help, guidance, and encouragement.

Mrs. Bagnell wrote that in spite of individual failure to live up to the great ideal of service set before us, she believes that "we must see that our love for the Movement, our desire to serve the Masters really well, have grown", and that therefore there is ground for hope "that the sum total of the strength, fidelity and devotion in the T. S. has increased."

Miss Bagnell also wrote, praying that at Convention we may "take fire" once again, and "respond with united determination in all the year that follows."

DENVER, COLORADO.

We, the Virya Branch, send our most cordial greetings to the Convention, with the earnest hope that the purpose of the Convention may be wholly understood and its leadership faithfully supported by those who are unable to be present as well as those who have that privilege.

ANNE EVANS, *President.*
MARY KENT WALLACE, *Secretary.*

GATESHEAD, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, Gateshead members send their sincere greetings and best wishes for a successful session; our thoughts will be with you. We fully appreciate the good you are doing, and the good work you have done in the past. The world needs you, and every member must give of their best. You shall have ours.

P. W. WARD,
Secretary, W. Q. Judge Lodge.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

Greetings and best wishes to the members assembled in Convention, and to all those who, like ourselves, are unable to attend.

We would as intimately add that it has seemed, more than once, and increasingly as time went by, that the T.S. Conventions, held as they are in the spring of the year, must have in and behind them the potential life and promise of springtime in its deeper aspect—the Lodge, or the Masters and their Chêlas, as embodying the higher side of Nature, being the immediate source of that deeper, inner, fuller life and promise.

In the springtime of the outer year we see to it that whatever should come up, shall do so, by bringing every power we possess to *make* it do so; be it food, or for clothing, or to make home and outlook more beautiful, whatever we need for bodily support and protection and to enrich the personal life. We feel it is much the same at Convention time and afterwards, the spring and summer of the Lodge for whatever it may then give to us. We may not know beforehand just what its gifts will be this time, but we can be sure they will be a renewal of inner life, and of the things of that life, whatever may be our own and the world's pressing inner needs. If, for our part, we need a new, more virile loyalty, or the wider opened eyes that will enable us to look through, to behind, what is going on around and within ourselves—thus to see there more clearly what is Black and what is White, either potentially or actually—and to have the will or courage both to declare and to stand ever more firmly for right principles and right action, as political, social, and economic "saviours" and advisers beckon and cry "Lo here, lo there!" so to speak; or if, as it should, it be more of love as the Masters and their Chêlas feel and show it, that is needed,—then we will get it, whether we can attend in person or not, once we have determined it shall be, as we do for outer things, in the springtime of the outer year.

The parallel, however, is not quite perfect; despite our every effort, outer Nature will yield only sparingly, and sometimes all but fails us—while the Lodge never does.

For the Pacific Branch,
W. H. BOX, *President.*

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: On behalf of the members of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch I have much pleasure in conveying to you our heartiest greetings and good wishes. We shall be observing Convention Day, as usual, and hope to have a continuance of that inspiration and understanding so helpful in the past.

As we would be thankful to receive, so we should be glad to give, and on this occasion what shall our contribution be? It shall be that spirit whereby we determine to give our all, ourselves, to the Cause we are privileged to serve. We would do this in gratitude to the Masters for their unceasing care and guidance, and in loving memory of those Messengers and Workers, faithful unto death, more intimately known to us. We would also do this in preparation for the next Lodge Messenger or Forerunner, so that having a vehicle, or body of people, to work through, the new effort may be so much more effective and beneficial. It is for us, therefore, to have our lamps filled, like the wise virgins, and be prepared for the opportunities of service that are ever present. To the extent that our light is embodied, in the degree that we have become the truth we would give out, will it be of weight and value in this darkened world.

So we feel that your home-coming to-day will be one of joy and thanksgiving, and we trust that out of it may arise that incentive to greater effort whereby the fulfilling of the Law shall be more fully made manifest.

To this end we think of you and your deliberations, and pray that the resolute response to such a call may be the means of bringing forth those "God-instructed men" the world so sadly needs.

E. HOWARD LINCOLN,
President.

SOUTH SHIELDS, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society Assembled in Convention: The members of the South Shields Branch send to all of you their very sincere heartfelt greetings. We always look forward to the Convention as a day of joy, reunion and festival: a time of aspiration, and for expressing our gratitude to the Founders of the Society. These are days of compromise, when evil is, as it were, sugar-coated to entrap unwary members of the human family into a false state of security. Therefore we turn to The Theosophical Society and its spirit of truth and righteousness for guidance through the maelstrom of material life, with its unbridled passions and desires for lower self-expression so popular to-day. We are with you in spirit and purpose, and we hope the keynote for the year following will be one of appeal to humanity to turn from the worship of the unreal to a desire to know and live in the Real.

THOMAS MACKEY,
President, South Shields Branch.

TORONTO, CANADA.

To the Secretary, Theosophical Society: Toronto Branch sends most fraternal Greetings to the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled.

As we realize more fully the importance of the work of the T.S. for the welfare of the world, we also begin to realize the responsibility that rests on its members whose Karma has led them into the circle of its influence. Surely there was never a time when that influence was more needed than it is now.

It is with a thrill of hope and encouragement that we read the QUARTERLY. Surely such teachings as those given in the "Screen" of the last April number are just what this old world needs to bring it back to sanity.

It has been the experience of most of us to find a much greater readiness on the part of "outsiders" to listen to and consider some of the truths brought to public notice by the T.S. There is an interest in and, in many cases, acceptance of the belief in reincarnation, that is very different from the strenuous opposition one can remember in the early days of the Movement.

The leaven is at work and our efforts will bear fruit in time.

ALBERT J. HARRIS.

WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, the members of the Whitley Bay Branch send sincere fraternal greetings.

The return of the Cycle of Convention day, filled with happy memories of past Conventions, also forms a new vantage point for further effort and achievement. Theosophy teaches the great value of striving towards an ideal; it not only shows the way, but postulates that man, being a spiritual entity, can therefore attain to spiritual consciousness. It shows the tremendous dignity of man and his potentialities, and thus with the knowledge of his heritage it enables him to find the way. The art of true living is to know what we are here for, and where we are going. The theosophical philosophy has placed the key of this knowledge in our hands; it depends upon each one of us whether we use the key.

We therefore trust that during the hours of Convention the key will be used to unlock the aspiration of all members, so that we may all draw nearer to our great ideal of Universal Brotherhood.

FREDK. A. ROSS.
President, Whitley Bay Branch.

ONEAL, ARKANSAS.

To the Officers and Members of The Theosophical Society, in Convention assembled:

I will not take up much of your time, but I do want to send my sincere greeting, and to say how glad I am to have the opportunity to be with you in thought, in heart, and in spirit to-day; and to offer my humble devotion to Those who make this Convention possible.

We hear much, these days, of "depression", of difficulties—which reminds me of what a great friend (not known, personally) once wrote: "We pray for opportunity, and when it is granted us, we label it difficulty". How true that is to-day!

Must we not be tried? How else may we prove our devotion, our sincerity? And so, we have the great privilege of living in this dark and rapidly changing age,—the glorious un-sought battle lies before us. May we so fight that battle as to make it possible for Great Ones once more to live among men.

I wish to thank those, personally, who have made it possible for me to receive the "Reports of the N.Y. Branch meetings",—they *are* splendid. The QUARTERLY is beyond any praise of mine,—it is a link between me and Home.

WM. E. MULLINAX.

OSLO, NORWAY.

War has been the topic at some of our Branch meetings this winter, and the QUARTERLY and T.S. literature has—as always—proved rich in answering the many questions. Although the following is but a trifling incident, I should like to relate an experience I had while serving in one of the northern regiments last year. I do not doubt that I should be in a position to prove my point still better were it a question of greater issues.

One summer night—while the sun was shining—the bugles sounded the "Alarm", and we were hustled off in lorries and by steamers to a large island on the coast, where a forest fire had been raging for weeks, and now was threatening the existence of the entire population. The boys had quite a rough time for a while, the smoke was suffocating and the heat bad, and they ran a constant risk of being injured. For days and nights they fought the onrushing fire, with hardly any time for food and rest. Amongst the recruits there were quite a few who —for political reasons—from the very beginning had shown reluctance and unwillingness at the drillground. No sooner had we started our almost hopeless task against the elements, than the spirit of the troops changed noticeably, and it became quite clear to us, how the feeling of mutual danger and the knowledge of suffering some slight hardships for the help and protection of fellowmen and their homes, brought to the surface the very best in every man, especially in the case of the most unwilling of recruits. Their conduct was admirable. Thus they were given an opportunity to show the stuff they were made of, and they all rose to the occasion and won the esteem of their officers—to whom they remained loyal afterwards.

European politicians are no longer harping upon "disarmament", as the only means of saving the world from the horrors of war; the trend has now changed from this to "equality of arms" and to "armed security". Pacifism has lost many a stronghold; too often have the governments of late been compelled to resort to armed force. Yet few understand the opportunities that the sufferings of warfare—and other calamities—bring to individuals and nations. To understand the eternal problem of life, it is necessary to believe in a life hereafter, which will give a clue to the understanding and valuation of tragedy—and in the end: the Divine Will. I should like to quote one of England's greatest authors:

"Tragedy at its best is a vision of the heart of life. The heart of life can only be laid bare in the agony and exultation of dreadful acts. The vision of agony, or spiritual contest, pushed beyond the limits of the dying personality, is exalting and cleansing. It is only by such vision that a multitude can be brought to the passionate knowledge of things eternal and exulting."

Theosophy gives such vision: To see and grasp our opportunity when it is offered unto us.

Convention time approaching, I wish to send you and all fellow Members united, my very heartiest greetings.

H. KNOFF.

Delegates and members showed the greatest interest in the reading of Letters of Greeting, which included, in addition to the foregoing, letters from Mr. Henning Dahl, President of the Oslo Branch (Norway); Mr. S. A. Drummond (Oklahoma); Mr. Birger Elwing (Texas); Miss Eleanor Evans (London); Miss Anna Fjæsted, President of the Arvika Branch (Sweden); Mr. Herman Hohnstedt, President of the Cincinnati Branch; Mrs. Lancaster (Los Angeles); Mr. T. W. Lincoln (Yorkshire, England); Mr. and Mrs. Plinio (Trieste, Italy); Mr. A. Jiménez Ron (Venezuela); Miss Tuttle (Berkeley, California); Mr. Acisclo Valedón (Venezuela); telegram from Miss Evans and Miss Wallace, as President and Secretary of the Branch in Denver; telegram from Captain and Mrs. Hamlen (Augusta, Maine); cablegram from Mrs. Graves, Mrs. Bagnell, Miss Bagnell, and cablegram from Mrs. Raymond (Tokio, Japan). Several other letters from abroad were read, which, like all other letters, were received with applause, but are not acknowledged or quoted in the open pages of the QUARTERLY for reasons stated elsewhere in this issue.

H.P.B.'S MESSAGE TO THE CONVENTION,

AMERICAN SECTION T. S., 1891.[1]

To the Boston Convention, T.S., 1891:

For the third time since my return to Europe in 1885, I am able to send to my brethren in Theosophy and fellow citizens of the United States a delegate from England to attend the annual Theosophical Convention and speak by word of mouth my greeting and warm congratulations. Suffering in body as I am continually, the only consolation that remains to me is to hear of the progress of the Holy Cause to which my health and strength have been given; but to which, now that these are going, I can offer only my passionate devotion and never-weakening good wishes for its success and welfare. The news therefore that comes from America, mail after mail, telling of new Branches and of well-considered and patiently worked-out plans for the advancement of Theosophy cheers and gladdens me with its evidences of growth, more than words can tell. Fellow Theosophists, I am proud of your noble work in the New World; Sisters and Brothers of America, I thank and I bless you for your unremitting labours for the common cause so dear to us all.

Let me remind you all once more that such work is now more than ever needed. The period which we have now reached in the cycle that will close between 1897-98 is, and will continue to be, one of great conflict and continued strain. If the T.S. can hold through it, good; if not, while Theosophy will remain unscathed, the Society will perish—perchance most ingloriously—and the World will suffer. I fervently hope that I may not see such a disaster in my present body. The critical nature of the stage on which we have entered is as well known to the forces that fight against us as to those that fight on our side. No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, of augmenting difficulties, of breathing suspicions, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and thrown into disarray. Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T.S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brother-

[1] In 1890, H.P.B. was too ill to write a message.

hood. Now I have marked with pain a tendency among you, as among the Theosophists in Europe and India, to quarrel over trifles, and to allow your very devotion to the cause of Theosophy to lead you into disunion. Believe me, that apart from such natural tendency, owing to the inherent imperfections of Human Nature, advantage is often taken by our ever-watchful enemies of your noblest qualities to betray and to mislead you. Sceptics will laugh at this statement, and even some of you may put small faith in the actual existence of the terrible forces of these mental, hence subjective and invisible, yet withal living and potent influences around all of us. But there they are, and I know of more than one among you who have felt them, and have actually been forced to acknowledge these extraneous mental pressures. On those of you who are unselfishly and sincerely devoted to the Cause, they will produce little, if any, impression. On some others, those who place their personal pride higher than their duty to the T.S., higher even than their pledge to their divine SELF, the effect is generally disastrous. Self-watchfulness is never more necessary than when a personal wish to lead, and wounded vanity, dress themselves in the peacock's feathers of devotion and altruistic work; but at the present crisis of the Society a lack of self-control and watchfulness may become fatal in every case. But these diabolical attempts of our powerful enemies—the irreconcilable foes of the truths now being given out and practically asserted—may be frustrated. If every Fellow in the Society were content to be an impersonal force for good, careless of praise or blame so long as he subserved the purposes of the Brotherhood, the progress made would astonish the World and place the Ark of the T.S. out of danger. Take for your motto in conduct during the coming year, "Peace with all who love Truth in sincerity," and the Convention of 1892 will bear eloquent witness to the strength that is born of unity. . . .

Here in England I am glad to be able to report to you that steady and rapid progress is being made. . . . Here, as with you, attempts are being successfully made to bring to bear the influence of Hindu on English thought, and many of our Hindu brethren are now writing for *Lucifer* short and clear papers on Indian philosophies. As it is one of the tasks of the T.S. to draw together the East and the West, so that each may supply the qualities lacking in the other and develop more fraternal feelings among nations so various, this literary intercourse will, I hope, prove of the utmost service in Aryanising Western thought.

The mention of *Lucifer* reminds me that the now assured position of that magazine is very largely due to the help rendered at a critical moment by the American Fellows. As my one absolutely unfettered medium of communication with Theosophists all over the World, its continuance was of grave importance to the whole Society. In its pages, month by month, I give such public teaching as is possible on Theosophical doctrines, and so carry on the most important of our Theosophical work. . . .

And now I have said all. I am not sufficiently strong to write a more lengthy message. . . . After all, every wish and thought I can utter are summed up in this one sentence, the never-dormant wish of my heart, "Be Theosophists, work for Theosophy!" Theosophy first, and Theosophy last; for its *practical* reali-

zation alone can save the Western world from that selfish and unbrotherly feeling that now divides race from race, one nation from the other; and from that hatred of class and social considerations that are the curse and disgrace of so-called Christian peoples. Theosophy alone can save it from sinking entirely into that mere luxurious materialism in which it will decay and putrefy as civilizations have done. In your hands, brothers, is placed in trust the welfare of the coming century; and great as is the trust, so great is also the responsibility. My own span of life may not be long, and if any of you have learned aught from my teachings, or have gained by my help a glimpse of the True Light, I ask you, in return, to strengthen the Cause by the triumph of which that True Light, made still brighter and more glorious through your individual and collective efforts, will lighten the World, and thus to let me see, before I part with this worn-out body, the stability of the Society secured.

May the blessings of the past and present great Teachers rest upon you. From myself accept collectively the assurance of my true, never-wavering fraternal feelings, and the sincere, heartfelt thanks for the work done by all the workers.

From their servant to the last,

H. P. Blavatsky.

THE LAST MESSAGE, 1891.

15: 4: 1891.

To the Fifth Convention of the American Section of The Theosophical Society

Brother Theosophists:

I have purposely omitted any mention of my oldest friend and fellow-worker, W. Q. Judge, in my general address to you, because I think that his unflagging and self-sacrificing efforts for the building up of Theosophy in America deserve special mention.

Had it not been for W. Q. Judge, Theosophy would not be where it is to-day in the United States. It is he who has mainly built up the movement among you, and he who has proved in a thousand ways his entire loyalty to the best interests of Theosophy and the Society.

Mutual admiration should play no part in a Theosophical Convention, but honour should be given where honour is due, and I gladly take this opportunity of stating in public, my deep appreciation of the work of your General Secretary, and of publicly tendering him my most sincere thanks and deeply-felt gratitude, in the name of Theosophy, for the noble work he is doing and has done.

Yours fraternally,

H. P. Blavatsky.

REVIEWS

The Invisible Influence, by Alexander Cannon, M.D., Ph.D., F.R.G.S.; E. P. Dutton and Co., New York; price, $1.50.

If you write a book, get a friend to contribute an Introduction which says: "No book has stirred up as much controversy in Europe in many years"; for then, as in this case, the publisher can quote the statement on the "jacket" in large type, and your ship is launched.

"What fools these mortals be!" We doubt, however, if Europe can have become quite so foolish as the writer of the Introduction implies. Dr. Cannon is a student and practitioner of hypnotism; Jesus Christ, he says, was one of the greatest of hypnotists, and was great, by inference, for that reason; hypnotism is the "Invisible Influence" of the book's title. Experiments in hypnotism, for those not familiar with the subject, can be surprising; but we had not imagined that this mid-Victorian "thrill" would have meant much to people to-day. Perhaps we had forgotten the law of cycles; perhaps we are due for another dose of raps and table-turning; perhaps the present generation will "discover" magic! It would be entertaining if someone were to rush at us with a copy of *Isis Unveiled* as the very latest fad,—*rien de plus chic*. Yet, the girls who gave up astrology for skirt-dancing must have died, years ago; or are they perennials? Seriously, can we envy the fate of those whose function it is to turn a world of flibbertigibbets into a world of sages and heroes? Who would be a Mahatma!

However, to return to our review: the writer of the Introduction chooses to regard Dr. Cannon's story, not as fiction, but as a record of fact. Dr. Cannon gives colour to this by stating in his Preface that "the mysteries of the East and the Far East have been fully explored in a long tour which was made, as it were, in search of the Holy Grail, more ancient than any known to history", and then, in the body of his book, by speaking of a journey of forty-two days "in sedan-like chairs", to Tibet, "where the great mystery Lama Convent lay", which he and his travelling companion visited, led there by "a mysterious austere personage in scarlet robes, black cap and only one arm," described as the Knight Commander, who brought "the great tidings" that Dr. Cannon was soon to be honoured "with that highest of titles, Knight Commander of Asia, which is equal to an Earl in this country", these great tidings being confirmed later, when Dr. Cannon, as he explains, now "held the scrolls, the Arms of Office, the coat of arms, and weapons of war which went with this noble office"—all in Tibet.

Still in Tibet, accompanied by the aforesaid one-armed Knight Commander, Dr. Cannon and his travelling companion, ceaselessly discussing hypnotism in English with their Tibetan friend, visited a near-by farm. "The conversation now became very interesting; the farmer's wife asked if there was any importance as regards destiny in the date of birth of an individual, *especially since Pythagoras laid such stress on dates and numbers*." Not bad for a Tibetan farmer's wife! The Tibetan Knight Commander, who claimed to know all things, and who quoted the Christian scriptures and French authorities on hypnotism with equal ease, had already been hypnotized by Dr. Cannon, obeying the latter's orders implicitly; but when it came to the farmer's wife our mental comment was that we had never read such bosh in our life or lives,—this verdict standing until we had read a few more pages, which landed us in the "Great Lama Convent", into the presence of the Great Lama himself. What followed was so childish, so utterly lacking in imagination as in verisimilitude, that we could explain it only on the theory that Dr. Cannon had accidentally hypnotized himself, and had written his book in a state of semi-dream, quite unable to distinguish between fact and fiction, and with his sense of humour, if he has any, completely paralysed. But can anyone, even the feeble-minded, mistake such balderdash for fact? It is pitiable,—and, although this is incidental, the English of the book is that of a school-boy of fourteen or less. X.Y.Z.

Some Turns of Thought in Modern Philosophy, by George Santayana; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; price, $1.75.

Five essays are included in this volume: "Locke and the Frontiers of Common Sense"; "Fifty Years of British Idealism"; "Revolutions in Science"; "A Long Way Round to Nirvana", this being the development of one of Freud's ideas; and "The Prestige of the Infinite", a review of Julien Benda's *Essai d'un Discours cohérent sur les Rapports de Dieu et du Monde*. With the exception of "The Prestige of the Infinite", the book is singularly devoid of instruction or interest. One sometimes wishes that Santayana had devoted his undoubted literary talents to lighter, more superficial topics. Like many men of letters, he writes more easily than he thinks. He is often most fluent, when his ideas are most elusive.

Santayana calls himself a materialist. Perhaps he adopted this label in his youth and hesitates to change it. However, it now serves only to befuddle the reader. Indeed, the general line of Santayana's thought is based upon propositions which are so incoherent as to be unintelligible. He says, for example, that "all modern philosophy, in so far as it is a description of experience and not of nature, . . . seems to belong to the sphere of literature, and to be without scientific value" (p. 47). We defy anyone to make sense out of this. How can one describe experience without describing nature? What can be the scientific value of a description of nature, which is not also a description of experience? If experience be not a part of nature, what is it? If materialists and idealists have any point of agreement, it is this,—that human consciousness and the

world or "nature" which surrounds it, are fundamentally one. We only know nature, in so far as it is made manifest to our consciousness, nor can our personal consciousness, even in its most subjective moods, be adequately conceived as a thing less "natural" than a physical body.

Fortunately, Santayana's "materialism" has no place in the chapter on "The Prestige of the Infinite". As he himself remarks, he has not always shared "the supreme respect for infinite Being which animates so many saints". Now, after many years, he is aware of a sort of conversion. Infinite Being suggests to him quietude and wisdom, and also "the involution of all forms", the resolution of all discords, the "realm of truth" in which all events and transformations are gathered together *sub specie æternitatis*. He is moved to genuine eloquence by this theme.

> We need not look for the principle of spiritual life in the distance: we have it at home from the beginning. Even the idea of infinite Being, though unnamed, is probably familiar. Perhaps in the biography of the human race, or of each budding mind, the infinite or indeterminate may have been the primary datum. On that homogeneous sensuous background, blank at first but secretly plastic, a spot here and a movement there may gradually have become discernible, until the whole picture of nature and history has shaped itself as we see it. A certain sense of that primitive datum, the infinite or indeterminate, may always remain as it were the outstretched canvas on which every picture is painted. And when the pictures vanish, as in deep sleep, the ancient simplicity and quietness may be actually recovered, in a conscious union with Brahma. So sensuous, so intimate, so unsophisticated the "return to God" may be for the spirit, without excluding the other avenues, intellectual and ascetic, by which this return may be effected in waking life, though then not so much in act as in intent only and allegiance. . . .
>
> Nature, in forming the human soul, unintentionally [?] unlocked for the mind the doors to truth and essence, partly by obliging the soul to attend to things which are outside, and partly by endowing the soul with far greater potentialities of sensation and invention than daily life is likely to call forth. Our minds are therefore naturally dissatisfied with their lot, and speculatively directed upon an outspread universe in which our persons count for almost nothing. . . . Spirit belongs intrinsically to another sphere, and cannot help wondering at the world, and suffering in it. The man in whom spirit is awake will continue to live and act, but with a difference. In so far as he has become pure spirit he will have transcended the fear of death or defeat: for now his instinctive fear, which will subsist, will be neutralized by an equally sincere consent to die and to fail. He will live henceforth in a truer and more serene sympathy with nature than is possible to rival natural beings. . . . Their will is in hopeless rebellion against the divine decrees which they must obey notwithstanding. The spiritual man, on the contrary, in so far as he has already passed intellectually into the eternal world, no longer endures unwillingly the continual death involved in living. . . . He renounces everything religiously in the very act of attaining it (pp. 115-121).

These words have a noble quality. It is well to recall to the human spirit its kinship with the Infinite God. Nevertheless, Santayana does not point to any practical method of realizing this union with Brahma. The intellect alone is powerless to accomplish such a transmutation of consciousness. As Gautama Buddha taught, Nirvana is not an object of thought but a state of being. Moreover, he was too wise to attempt to describe or to define a profound mystical experience in ordinary mental terms. Of all intellectual enterprises, the most futile is the effort to form a conception of the Absolute. It is stated that medi-

tation is the inexpressible yearning of man to "go out towards the Infinite". The knowledge thus acquired may, indeed, seem infinite to us; but the more vast is this knowledge, the more conscious is the knower of the unfathomable Mystery which encompasses him. "One thing I know", said Socrates, "that I know nothing." The humility of the sage is proportionate to his wisdom.

S.V.L.

The Dawn of Conscience, by James Henry Breasted; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1933; price, $3.00.

This new book of Professor Breasted's is what we should have every reason to expect it to be—thoughtful, full of information, clear-cut. It takes us from the earliest times in Egypt of which we have even fragmentary records, up to the fall of Akhenaton, and then, rather rapidly, through the succeeding centuries when Egypt, in her decadence, had lost the inner, creative power which had manifested itself in the purest religious aspiration. About the time of the Middle Kingdom (roughly 2000 B.C.), a steadily increasing sense of social anxiety, openly expressed, began to show itself; and it is in general to this period and to this new approach toward life, that Professor Breasted refers when he speaks of the dawn of conscience. It was during this period that the purely ethical literature of ancient Egypt was most in vogue—literature regarding the conduct of human affairs: "The Maxims of Ptahhotep", "The Instructions of Ke'gemni", "The Testament of Amenemhat", etc., a later example being "The Wisdom of Amenemope"; and Professor Breasted, in a number of very interesting pages, traces the evidence for a connection between these moral writings of Egypt, and some of the Hebrew literature. He shows that, in reality, these are the source of many parts of the Old Testament, hitherto called "revelation", so that we are led to recognize (if we have not already long since done so), how much we owe to Egypt.

Almost from the start, however, the student of Theosophy will find a great deal in this book with which he will be in radical disagreement; such, for instance, as the belief that religious ideas and ideals were evolved by man himself, out of his own self-created nature-worship. Yet this is the thesis upon which Professor Breasted builds his entire argument. It is the usual inverted image of most archaeologists and students of early religions, as already pointed out on many occasions by the QUARTERLY. All the basic "facts" of the argument are upside-down. It would be difficult if not impossible to convince the student of Theosophy that the Sun-god Ra owed his very existence to the fact that the early Egyptians recognized the beneficent and powerful effects of the material sun upon the life of mankind; nor could we agree that Osiris came into being merely because the verdure which he is supposed impersonally to have typified, itself sprang into life as a result of the yearly inundation of the Nile. The student of Theosophy would maintain that Ra and Osiris were divine Kings who, in the most literal sense, had ruled on earth in the days when the early races believed in and sought guidance from above, and before man became poisoned by the idea

that he was his own best and only law-maker. Nor would the student of Theosophy agree with Professor Breasted in considering the Pyramid Age as "the age of materialism", merely, so far as we can judge, because of the magnificent engineering feats manifested in the stupendous erections of Khufu, Khafra, Menkaura and others before them. The pyramids speak for themselves, and for the divinely exalted ideals of their period, and there is nothing whatever in the exoteric musings of Ptahhotep, Ke'gemni and the rest, praiseworthy as they are within their own limits, which can in any way compare with the virility, the fire, the esoteric splendour of the Pyramid Texts. The more Egypt advanced in outer glory, the more the glory of her ancient, esoteric truths was obscured. In the early days, when the Lodge still had its servants in the King-Initiates, a portion of the hidden Wisdom could, by means of symbolic language, be committed to writing—as much of it as is ever given out in this way—so that future generations (those who had the clue), might still read and learn from these Texts. But with the Feudal Age, when Egypt became darkened by the creeping shadow of democratic ideas, when the nobles, and later the people themselves, began to clamour for "equal rights", with all that that implies of attendant dangers and growing inner blindness, then and *only* then, did the teaching of "social conscience" become necessary, because the old spiritual values were rapidly fading. Are these long lists of moral precepts necessarily an indication of interior growth as Professor Breasted would have us believe? Social standards and rules of conduct which belong to a specific age, change and pass, and as man becomes more externalized, he may well understand moral rather than spiritual direction: he has to be instructed in a language comprehensible to him. All the religious teaching of the past—religious in the widest interpretation of the word—has had to be given in accordance with the capacity of its hearers, and in every religion there has always been, and no doubt always will be, an exoteric presentation of the esoteric truth which lies behind it. The lofty state of spiritual consciousness which made the building of the pyramids possible (first the spiritual construction, then the concrete erections), surely indicates a higher civilization, in an interior sense, than that of the later period with its carefully annotated codes.

One final protest! Remembering the many traditions of lost civilizations and submerged continents, we feel that Professor Breasted makes an unjustifiable statement when he writes: "There was no civilized ancestry from whom the prehistoric Nile-dweller might receive an inheritance of culture," and again, "The significance of the appearance of civilization along the Nile does not lie in the splendour of its buildings alone, but in the fact that as a continuous and uninterrupted social evolution steadily moving on for a thousand years, it was rising *for the first time on our globe*." The italics are Professor Breasted's own—but why is he so certain of the truth of this claim? Civilizations move in cycles, as another distinguished Egyptologist, Flinders Petrie, has so clearly demonstrated, and what satisfactory evidence have we contrary to the idea that these cycles may stretch back into a past so remote that tradition alone is evidence that they existed? History as such, is a very recent institution indeed, Herod-

otus notwithstanding, and the mere fact that the hieroglyphic writing which we find in the earliest monuments of the Thinite Period is already a completely formed, complicated system, should give us much food for thought. Where did that highly civilized writing come from? Students of Theosophy, whose reverence for Egypt's ancient splendour is profound, would surely feel that a greater honour was being done her by giving her her rightful place in a vast evolutionary pageant of long anterior civilizations (the very records of which are now almost, though not entirely, lost), than is the case when offering her the isolated if illustrious precedence suggested by Professor Breasted. T.D.

Notebook of Nothing, Fragments of the Lyrical Diary of a Sienese Shepherdess (by Dina Ferri), with an introduction by Piero Misciattelli; translated from the Italian by Helen Josephine Robins and Harriet Reid; Bruce Humphries, Inc., Boston; price, $2.00.

A book, a life, to be accounted for satisfactorily only through the "twin doctrines" of Karma and Reincarnation. A young Italian peasant girl, her parents too poor to complete her elementary school education, tended sheep on her native hills near Siena. With her she carried a little notebook, jotting down her thoughts and experiences as the days and years passed—simple enough incidents: the music of birds and streams, of sunlight and starlight and changing seasons; the pathos of the humble peasant life about her. But the child was a poet, and her jottings, some in verse form, some in eloquent prose, are all poetry. She saw with the eye of the poet, and beauty of expression followed with the simple spontaneity of a bird song. Nature, the approach to the Real for so many of us, awakened in her a joyous response at every turn: "I heard in an undertone a great chorus of voices singing to the sky and the sun, and I longed to seize but one of these voices and shut it into my soul." But more than that, for her, "nature murmurs the poetry of labour",—she is one with all that suffers, all that yearns in the humble life about her, responding with unfailing pity, and always with an echo of the great harmony, an intuitive sense of the joy beneath the pain: "Who can be happy who has not wept?" "Never through the whole year, grow pomegranates and pansy flowers." Or of the deserted baby, dead in a damp garret: "There is still a smile on your little white face, and your tiny hand is closed on the gift the Angel brought you. It is pardon for the men who forgot you."

Due to an accident, her notebooks were discovered, and because of their great promise, a scholarship fund was obtained, providing an education for her—*unfortunately*, as many of us would think, and as she herself sensed later on, for while it strengthened her desire to "read the great secret that draws us on", it also made the mystery of life, and its pain, the more incomprehensible. "Still I pursue my way, because a strange destiny has so decreed, and still the horizon grows wider and wider. But I no longer see there the mountain tops as once in the country where I was born, because the same fate that draws me on has wrapped them in mist which never clears." She died at the age of twenty, in a

hospital in Siena, courageously accepting her own great suffering, but tormented by the thought of her inability ever to help her parents in their poverty. Baffled as she was by the mystery of life, several fragments, written near the end, suggest that she held in her hand the key, ready to turn when next the opportunity offers. Referring to times when the heart is heavy with weariness or grief, she writes: "The music of the heart is silenced, the mysterious inward voice dies in a sigh of weakness; we rebel against natural law, and in trying to lift ourselves in a void without support we fall to lower depths. It is only the great souls who always hear the voice of the heart, because that is the voice of love, and there is no true greatness without love." J.C.

The Life of Cardinal Mercier, by John A. Gade; Charles Scribner's Sons, New York and London, 1934; price, $2.75.

It is not often that a book can be recommended so unreservedly, as in this case. It is quite the best life of Cardinal Mercier so far written, and is likely to retain its pre-eminence for many years. The author is a Protestant, and while writing with great admiration for his subject, avoids the mistake which most Roman Catholic biographers make when portraying the life and character of a co-religionist whose saintliness may lead to his canonization,—that is, Mr. Gade does not gush, is not fulsome, and writes throughout in the best of taste. It is a book of which America should be proud, though it won't be, because contemporary America takes its literary opinions from newspaper reviewers, nearly all of whom hate anything which is not as vulgar as they are.

Cardinal Mercier and King Albert of Belgium were, in our opinion, the only great men produced, or revealed, by the World War. This is because they were not in the least concerned about their own glory; they were incapable of "playing politics"; they stood immovably for what they believed to be right, regardless of consequences. Of the two men, the Cardinal seems to us to be much the greater. It is obvious that his task was by far the more difficult. Mercier had to fight the Germans while in their hands; he also had to fight those of his brother Cardinals who were Pro-German, and there were plenty of them. But the two men were devoted friends, and while the King would have agreed wholeheartedly with our comparison, Mercier would have deplored it.

Mercier was an extraordinarily learned man, thoroughly familiar with modern science, philosophy and psychology, as well as with the teaching of Thomas Aquinas and the "sacred theology" of the Middle Ages. He was also an intense patriot, and, above all, a priest, as a priest ought to be,—not only deeply religious, but self-disciplined until control had become almost perfect, with ever-flowing sympathy and ever-burning zeal, devoting himself ceaselessly to the service of his Lord. The things he said were not echoes from books, but were hammered from his own experience, his own suffering, his courage. Thus: "However troubled a situation may be, or however near it may seem to disaster and despair, we must always keep our heads up and retain a stout heart. Discouragement never created energy, and only energy can prepare triumph."

Again: "Suffering accepted and vanquished will give you a security which may become the most exquisite fruit of your life".

He was the embodiment of alert intelligence,—which, being said, compels mention of the fact that one of his later enthusiasms was peculiarly and, we should say, painfully Roman. Yet perhaps the moral of this is that so long as the fundamentals are sound, doctrinal oddities do not greatly matter,—until a stage has been reached when a disciple, to know his Master truly, must rid himself, not only of his superstitions, but of "all dependence upon external things"; and Mercier, great as he was, certainly had not acquired *Uparati* (Cessation), essential as a qualification for chêlaship, as Shankara Acharya declared many centuries ago.

The chapters dealing with Mercier's activities during the War, are admirably written and of fascinating interest. The author (who was in Belgium in 1916-17, as a member of the Relief Commission) is restrained, but the facts speak for themselves, and one of the reasons why we hope his book will be widely read is that people in America and England try to forget, if they ever knew, what Germany did at that time. Read about it directly, with their eyes open, they will not (why be made uncomfortable!), but in this form, related quietly as an outer event in Mercier's life, they will have less chance to shut their ears and close their minds,—will have less chance, therefore, to rest assured, with fatuous credulity, that if it were not for France, Germany would behave like a lamb among lambs.

Readers of the QUARTERLY will be helping a good Cause if they will ask for this book at their Public Library, and will then recommend it to all their friends.

T.

The Transformation of Nature in Art, by Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy. Harvard University Press, Cambridge; price, $3.

This is a collection of essays, the first of which, "The Theory of Art in Asia", is the most interesting. Dr. Coomaraswamy begins by saying, "In the following pages there is presented a statement of Oriental æsthetic theory based mainly on Indian and partly on Chinese sources; at the same time, by means of notes and occasional remarks, a basis is offered for a general theory of art co-ordinating Eastern and Western points of view. Whenever European art is referred to by way of contrast or elucidation, it should be remembered that 'European art' is of two very different kinds, one Christian and scholastic, the other post-Renaissance and personal. It will be evident enough from our essay on Eckhart, and might have been made equally clear from a study of St. Thomas and his sources, that there was a time when Europe and Asia could and did actually understand each other very well. Asia has remained herself; but subsequent to the extroversion of the European consciousness and its preoccupation with surfaces, it has become more and more difficult for European minds to think in terms of unity."

He proceeds to describe the "Yoga" of the artist, wherein, meditating de-

votedly upon an idea, he draws to himself its true form from the higher worlds, in other terms, from "the immanent space in the heart". Contemplating this form, he must become one with it and realize it in himself. Dante said: "Who paints a figure, if he cannot be it, cannot draw it."

Coomaraswamy quotes the famous six canons of Hsieh Ho, first published in the fifth century and still authoritative. The first canon he renders thus: "Operation or revolution (yün 13817) or concord or reverberation (yün 13843) of the spirit (chi 1064) in life movement." This is translated more agreeably by Okakura as, "the life movement of the spirit through the rhythm of things." This canon remains an infallible criterion of the value of all works of art. The life movement of the spirit forms the world according to Law and Principle, and the work of art imitates these laws and not the illusory appearances of manifestation. Coomaraswamy says: "Naturalism is antipathetic to religious art of all kinds, to art of any kind. The Indian ikon is not constructed to function biologically, the Christian ikon cannot be thought [of] as moved by any other thing than its form, and each should, strictly speaking, be regarded as a kind of diagram, expressing certain ideas, and not as the likeness of anything on earth."

The ideas and symbols set forth in art are more potent and intelligible as they are more fixed and representative of the concepts of the race. We understand a time-honoured symbol at once. It is a familiar language. Westerners are not puzzled when they see the Holy Ghost descending as a dove. Easterners are not surprised when they see the Buddha descending to incarnation in the form of a little elephant.

> Oriental life is modelled on types of conduct sanctioned by tradition. For India, Rama and Sîta represent ideals still potent, the *svadharma* of each caste is a *mode* of behaviour, good form being *à la mode;* and until recently every Chinese accepted as a matter of course the concept of manners established by Confucius. The Japanese word for rudeness means "acting in an unexpected way". . . . This external conformity, whereby a man is lost in the crowd as true architecture seems to be a part of its native landscape, constitutes for the Oriental himself a privacy within which the individual character can flower unhampered. . . . It has been well said that civilization is style. An immanent culture in this sense endows every individual with an outward grace, a typological perfection, such as only the rarest beings can achieve by their own effort, a kind of perfection which does not belong to genius; whereas a democracy, which requires of every man to save his own "face" and soul, actually condemns each to an exhibition of his own irregularity and imperfection, and this implicit acceptance of formal imperfection only too easily passes over into an exhibitionism which makes a virtue of vanity and is complacently described as self-expression.

Westerners, in the mass, have arrived at the democratic stage where they confidently pronounce judgment on every work of art whether they know any thing about it or not. "I don't know any thing about art but I know what I like," is the common expression of this pretentiousness. The theory of Indian art requires infinitely more both of the artist and of the spectator than the theory of modern European art. Coomaraswamy says it is, "a way of destruction of the mental and affective barriers behind which the natural manifestation is concealed." It requires "self-identification with the ultimate theme". He

quotes an excellent Indian definition: "Art is Expression informed by Ideal Beauty."

The second essay is on Meister Eckhart's View of Art, showing that the theories of mediæval scholasticism agreed fundamentally with those of the Hindu philosophers. Any one familiar with the works of Giotto and the frescoes of Ajanta, with Gothic and T'ang sculpture, will be perfectly aware of this. The other essays on the æsthetic of the Sukranitisara, on Paroksha, on Abhasa, and on the origin and use of images in India are less valuable to the general reader. Although published at Harvard, the book would seem to be written for Hindus or Sanskrit scholars. The pages are heavy with Sanskrit words which fatigue and distract the reader. Indeed, to dig out the ideas requires more persistence than most would find worth while. It is a pity that the phraseology of the book should be so difficult when its substance is of such immense value and interest.

St.C.LaD.

High Gods in North America, by W. Schmidt (Professor of Ethnology and Linguistics in the University of Vienna); Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1934, price, $2.75.

The material for these lectures, delivered at Oxford as a result of the Upton Foundation, was culled by Professor Schmidt from his monumental work, *Ursprung der Gottesidee*. He devotes the preliminary chapters to establishing the validity of his method of research, and of his conclusion that the Selish, the Algonkins and certain California tribes are the oldest of North American cultures, and then brings to us a wealth of interesting information and deductions.

The belief, still prevalent in missionary circles, that the loftier of the Indian concepts were inspired by Christian teaching, is summarily disposed of, as there is proof positive of an antiquity long antedating the arrival of the White Men. Professor Schmidt then proceeds to show that, contradicting all evolutionistic principles, the native religions have not developed upward from height to height through long ages of time; that, on the contrary, they are seen to diminish in vigour, purity and amplitude from the high levels of the original inspiration possessed by the oldest tribal groups. Among these he finds the idea of a Creator in its most philosophic form, coupled with the belief in Him as a true Supreme God, who is not a far-off abstraction, but an All-Father who takes a keen interest in the lives of His people and exercises over them a manifold influence; and to whom they address themselves in a continuous worship of prayer, sacrifice and ceremonies. In the most ancient of all, there is recognized but one God, with no other figure to shadow His supremacy; deified First Ancestors appear only at a much later date.

(An unprejudiced study of these First Ancestors and Culture Heroes might yield valuable results; according to myths quoted by Professor Schmidt, such Restorers have appeared at periods of decadence in the religious life, and have inspired it once more with the fulness of energy which had been imparted originally by the Supreme One.)

Many tribal traditions are well worth citing; there is the Selish account of the Soul's journey, station by station, up the steep path of life to the land of its desire; there is a tantalizingly short section telling of a celibate society composed of stoic philosophers, the bravest among all the braves, who were the first to enter and the last to leave a battle; there is the poetry of the Walum Olum Legend. The following excerpts from the Delaware Thanksgiving Rite will serve to show the nobility of its conception, though the enactment and the symbolism must be left to the imagination.

As is usual in such ceremonies, there is a Leader, or Speaker. After he has given thanks to the Great Spirit "to whom all men must pray each morning", he speaks of the task imposed on everyone, of reaching the Creator at the end of his life; and he continues: "We must all put our thought to this meeting, so that the Great Spirit will look upon us and grant what we ask. You come here to pray, you have this way to reach Him all through life. Do not think of evil, strive always to think of the good He has given us. . . . We know our fathers who have left this earth are in the land of Spirits; there the old and the crippled and the blind look as fair as the rest, for it is nothing but the flesh that is injured. No sun shines there, but a light much brighter than the sun, the Creator makes it bright by His power." He closes the rite with this exhortation:

"My kindred, there is something I want to say, for you to bear well in mind. It is told traditionally that where one meditates on God in his heart, there is formed the thought. This is exceedingly hard, but it is necessary that we thus prepare the soul-spirit, that we may be able to take it, each one, home again to where it belongs, to our Father, when it is finished here."

To have gathered and classified such material, and to put the seal of authoritative scholarship on its value, is a real contribution to Theosophy. It establishes a foothold in the respected world of science for another of Madame Blavatsky's tenets which ran counter to all the accepted formulas of her day: that religion, far from following with lagging steps the course of material evolution, is a pure, primal revelation, to be gradually dragged down by ignorance and self-will to the common levels of human interpretation. E.A.

With so many of the Protestant clergy denouncing war as wholly evil regardless of the motive with which it be waged—whether in defence of the weak, or as brigandage—it is opportune to remind our readers of the pamphlet by Charles Johnston, *Christianity and War*, published by The Quarterly Book Department in 1915. There could be no better defence of the Christian Master, or clearer proof of that Master's belligerency, than Mr. Johnston's pamphlet provides.

As an antidote to the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick's "I renounce war, and never again will I sanction or support another",—we believe that many students of Theosophy would be glad to send *Christianity and War* to clergymen whom they know to be in need of it. Its price is ten cents, which includes postage.

T.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 387.—*Some of us who live far from New York would give so much to live close to the centre, close to Headquarters. We feel as if we were exiled. What can we do to get home?*

ANSWER.—One may assume that the querent lives in a foreign land, or perhaps in some other part of this continent. He evidently feels that if he could only live in New York, near Headquarters, life would be so much more interesting and instructive. Of course, the place of our birth, or of our Karmic adoption, in nearly all cases is the place in which we are intended to grow up and to work. It is our natural environment, and anyone who leaves it runs a grave risk, unless his motive be unselfish,—unless his motive be solely to *serve* in some other part of the world, as he believes he would not be able to serve in the place of his birth.

Years ago in London, when the Headquarters was in Avenue Road, where H.P.B. then lived, someone asked H.P.B. if he could not go to India, saying it would be "so easy if one were in the Himalayas". H.P.B. said in effect: Easy? You would not survive it for twenty-four hours! Your Himalayas are right here in London, where you belong. In her reply is contained the real answer of Theosophy to this question. The inner light, as Judge so constantly reminded us, is the only light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and for the finding of that inner light, it does not matter whether we are in New York or at the other end of the earth. It *might* prove easier, it might prove infinitely more difficult, to get in touch with that inner light here rather than elsewhere. But the answer must depend ultimately upon the motive instigating the change of place. If the individual were simply seeking more light, thinking that he might get further instruction, or that life here would be more pleasant or less disagreeable, then he would be making the greatest possible mistake. Life is just as unpleasant in one place as in another; there is nothing to choose! It is only youth (and the most unpardonable form of youth) which still dreams the dream that if it were somewhere other than it is, the sky would always be bright and rain would never fall and everyone would for ever be agreeable. There is no such place, there are no such people, anywhere on earth. As we grow a little older, we discover facts of this kind, and are none the worse for them—are really much more cheerful than youth knows how to be. We must realize that right within our reach, in our present surroundings, no matter what they are, are the means, the weapons, that Karma, the Good Law, has placed in our hands with which to effect our deliverance. The ultimate question is not in the least where we think we shall be happiest, but *where we can be of most use* And heaven defend us from the illusion which might lead us to suppose that we could be of more use in China or India (or New York) than right where Karma has placed us. There is plenty to do there, and more than we can possibly accomplish. Our surroundings, whatever they may be, are the door, which, if we will open it, will lead us straight into the world of the Real. There is no other door. There cannot be any other door, except our circumstances here and now, in our own homes, in our business, in our environment as a whole. While it is not always easy to see things in that light, we shall not really begin to live until we do.

Of course, common sense must govern. If you were living near a volcano with a record of periodical eruption, it is difficult to imagine the duty that might hold you there against the pull of self-preservation; and self-preservation is sometimes as valid a duty as any other. E.T.H.

QUESTION NO. 388.—*How may those in whom the higher intuitions are not developed best avoid the dangers of psychism when meditating?*

ANSWER.—The first step would obviously be for each one to discover the particular kind of "psychism" to which he, individually, was most inclined, and to attack that. Psychism appears under many guises, some of which might be classed as positive, others as negative. Among the former are over-activity of the mind or the emotions; among the latter, drifting or day-dreaming. In each case these states must be replaced by some higher state as nearly as possible approaching the conditions which we know to be necessary to true meditation. If our interior stillness is broken by the noise of our minds or the sudden welling up of emotion, we must make every effort to get above these lower, personal planes, for "all noise is psychic", whether mental or otherwise. If we discover that we have drifted into "day-dreaming", all our attention should again be brought under control and re-directed, for if meditation is anything at all, it is one-pointed and all-absorbing. But our primary need is to be very definite in our realization of that which we must avoid, as well as of that which we wish to attain. Then, if we have an unshakable faith that our Master is eagerly reinforcing every effort of ours, we should find that our ideal itself is deepening and expanding, and that each day we are one step nearer to him who is the very goal and object of our meditation. T.A.

ANSWER.—Meditation, rightly used, is the "open-sesame" to the life of the Soul, to the world of Reality. There are many stages of meditation as one leaves behind the psychic world in which we live, and approaches nearer to, or penetrates farther into, the world of Reality. The dangers of psychism in meditation, therefore, are not confined to the lower stages only, but are present until a high stage has been reached and maintained. Perhaps as simple a way as any of avoiding such dangers is by holding to a right sense of direction, and by attention and action: by keeping the attention fixed on the immediate objective during meditations, and by right action in that direction between meditations. If one pursues his meditations intelligently, with attendant action purposeful, there will be a logical progression of objectives. Take perseverance, for example. As one meditates on perseverance and tries to act out one's findings, one will gain a knowledge of perseverance as a whole, the positive and negative aspects of it, and, thus, will come to understand the faults in himself which keep him from exercising proper perseverance. Perhaps he will find that fear enters into his failure. He is led logically to the contemplation of courage. Here he may find that a lack of loyalty is a hindrance. He is led logically to the contemplation of loyalty, and so on. At all times he must immediately be suspicious if self enters the picture. For instance, he should not imagine *himself* as loyal. He should contemplate the ideal of loyalty and make it his endeavour to merge himself into the ideal. When a right sense of direction is not held during meditations and the attention wanders, the trouble is not confined to such periods only, but is due, also, to the failure to carry through in action between times. G.M.W.K.

ANSWER.—If meditation be not strengthening to the will, there is something wrong with the method, and it would be wise to seek the advice of an older student. Methods suitable for certain students are not suitable for others. Positive action by the will during the day, and the practice of completely concentrating the mind on each thing that one does, will be found helpful during times of meditation, in overcoming the negativeness that leads to psychism.

J.F.B.M.

ANSWER.—It would appear that such books as *Fragments* provide just the help that this questioner seeks. Carefully to read a "Fragment" that is in harmony with what one is seeking and ardently desiring; then to take it daily, at each meditation, going thoughtfully over each phrase until one's being is pervaded by its living beauty; then to rest awhile in contemplation of it, as at a glorious sunset,—ready to carry what one has found into the working hours, taking it again at the next time of quiet. Doing this daily, one would find that the "Fragment" had lifted one above the danger of psychism, and, having thus contacted the higher, one would be learning how to avoid the lower. R.P.